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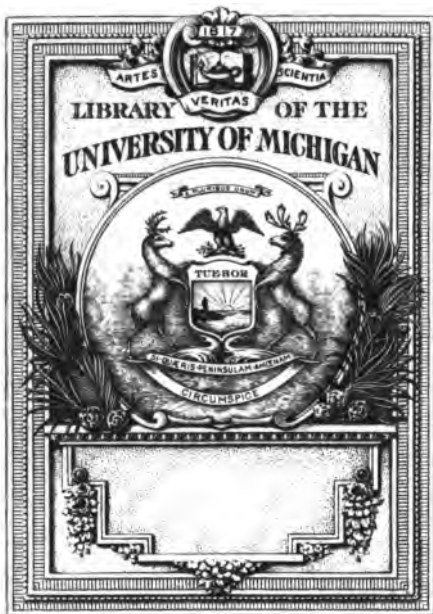
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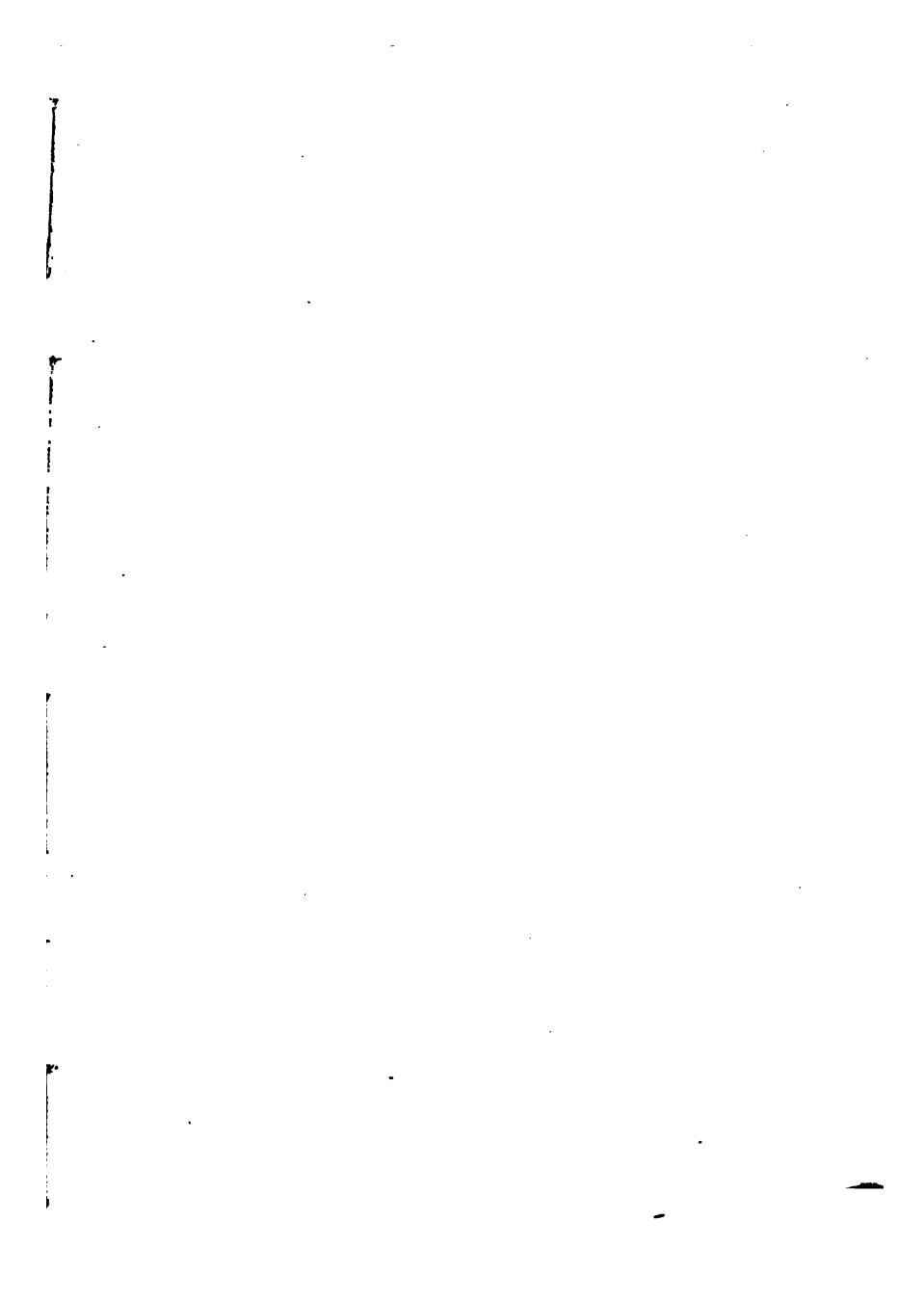
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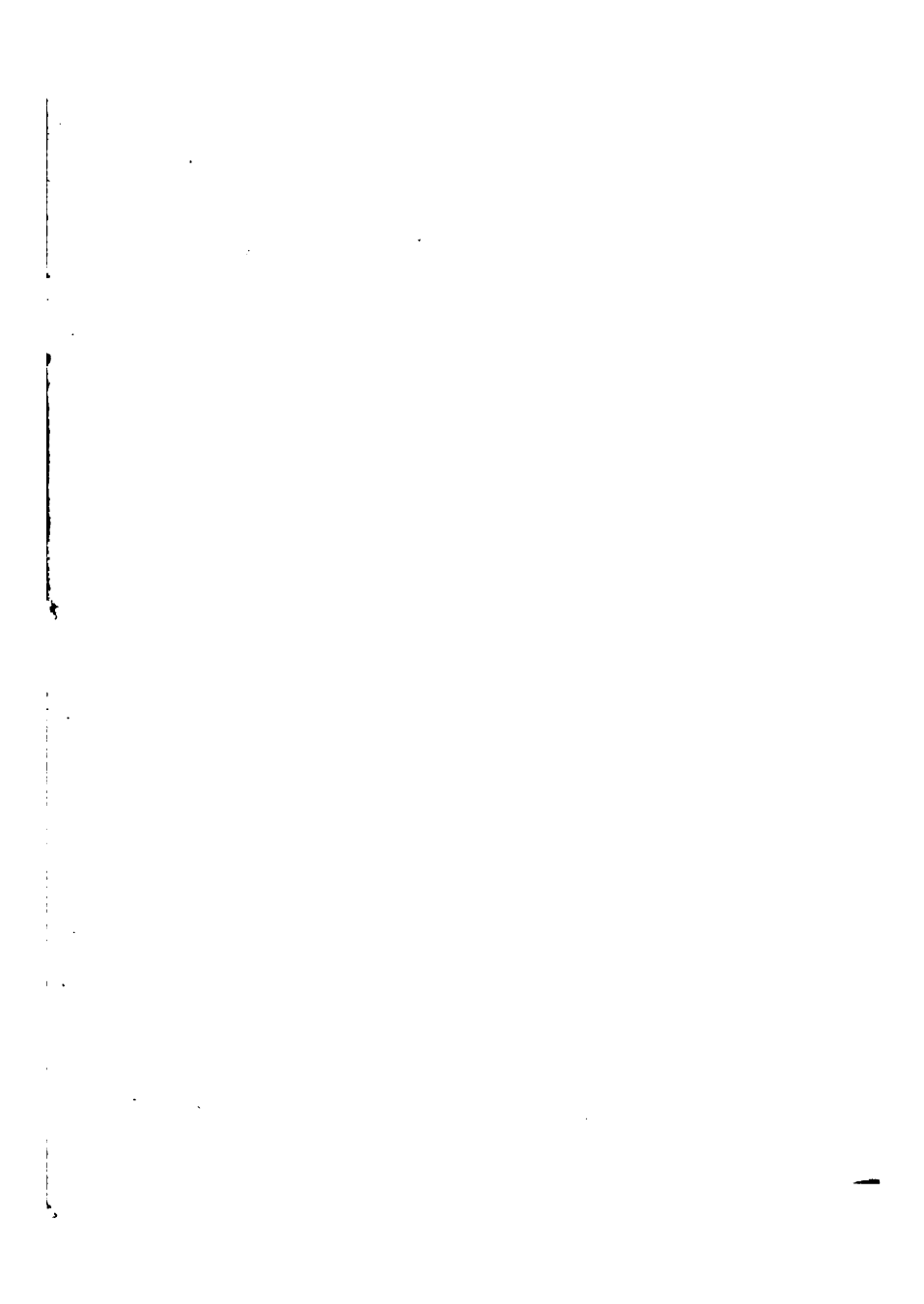
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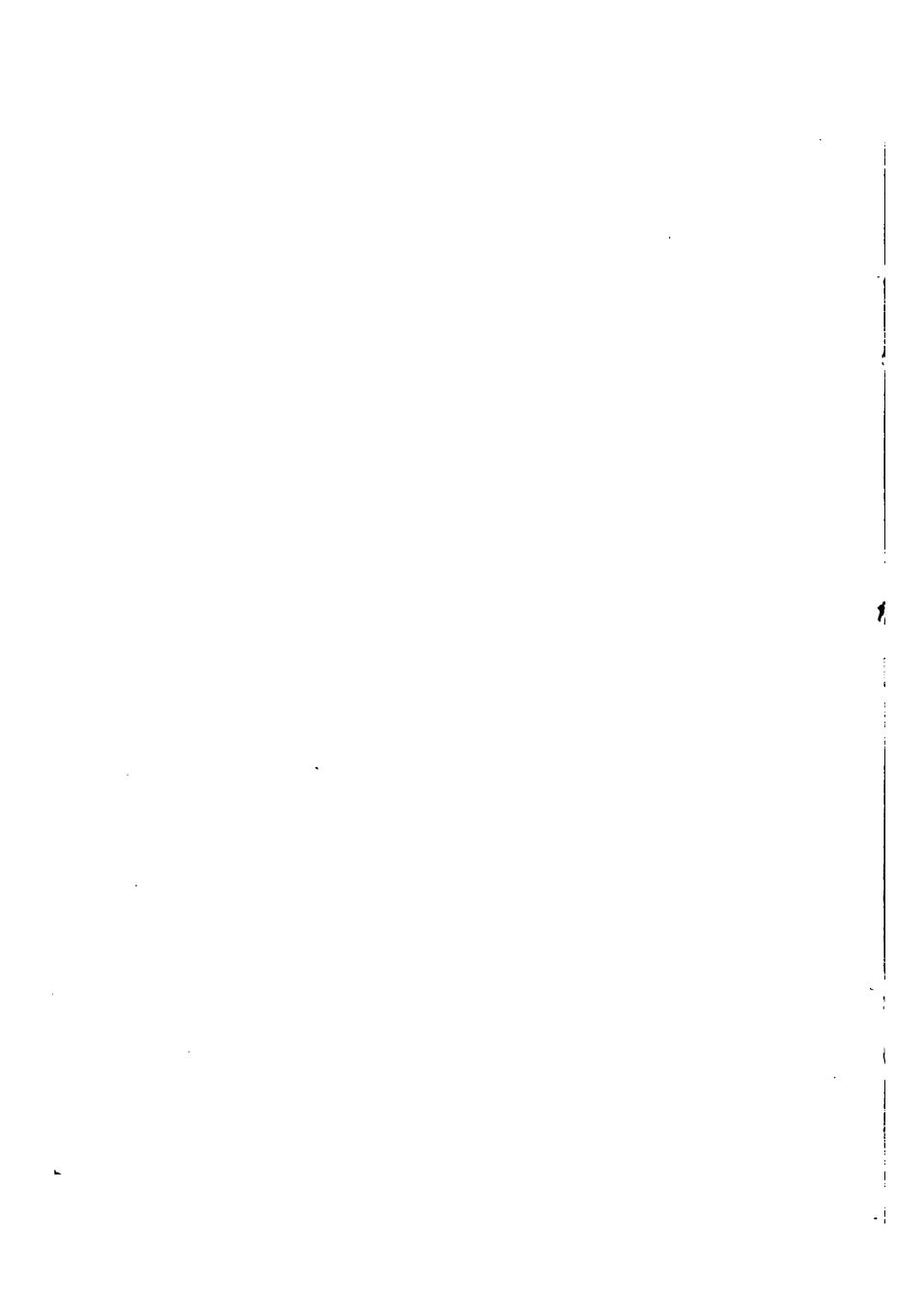
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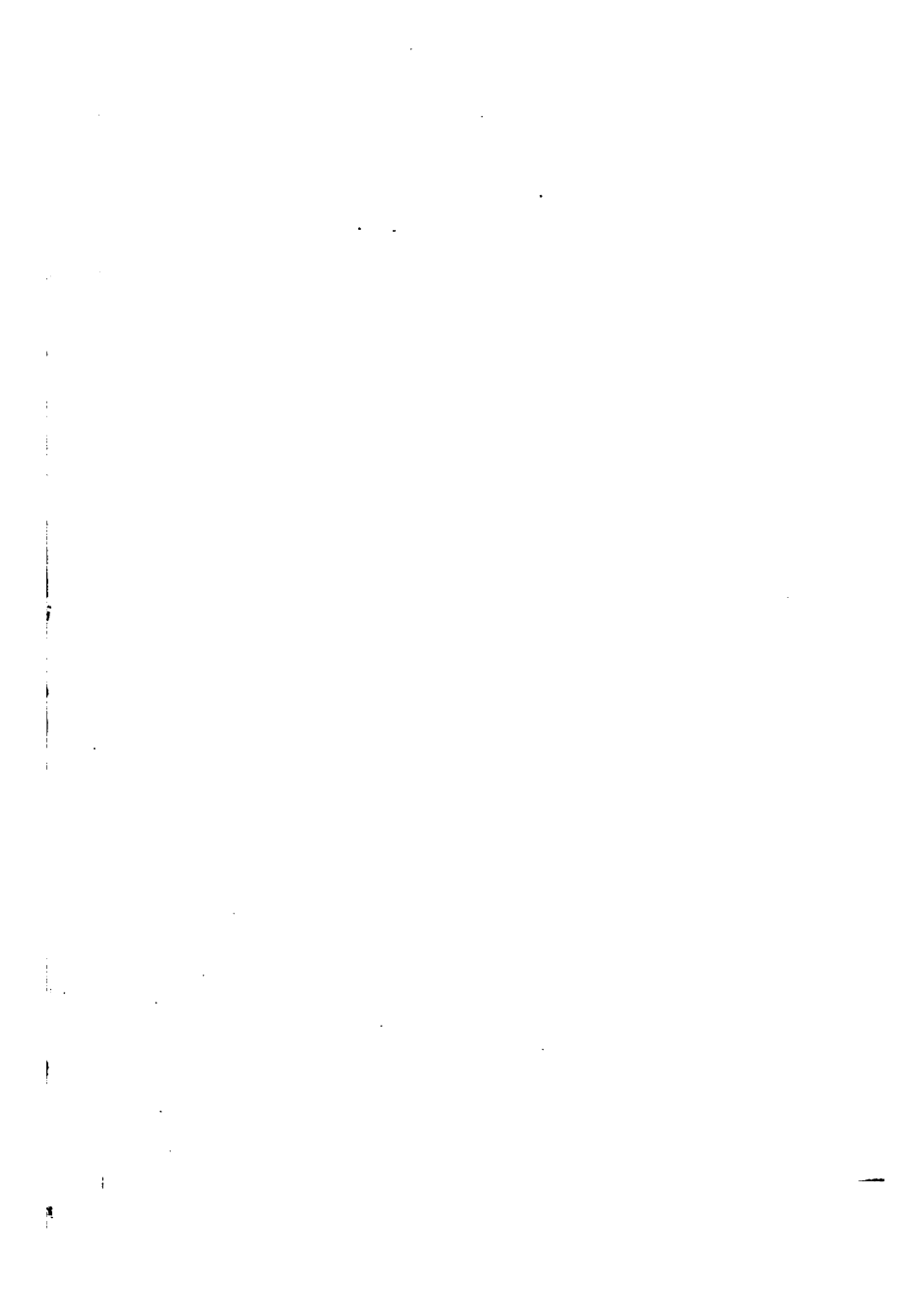


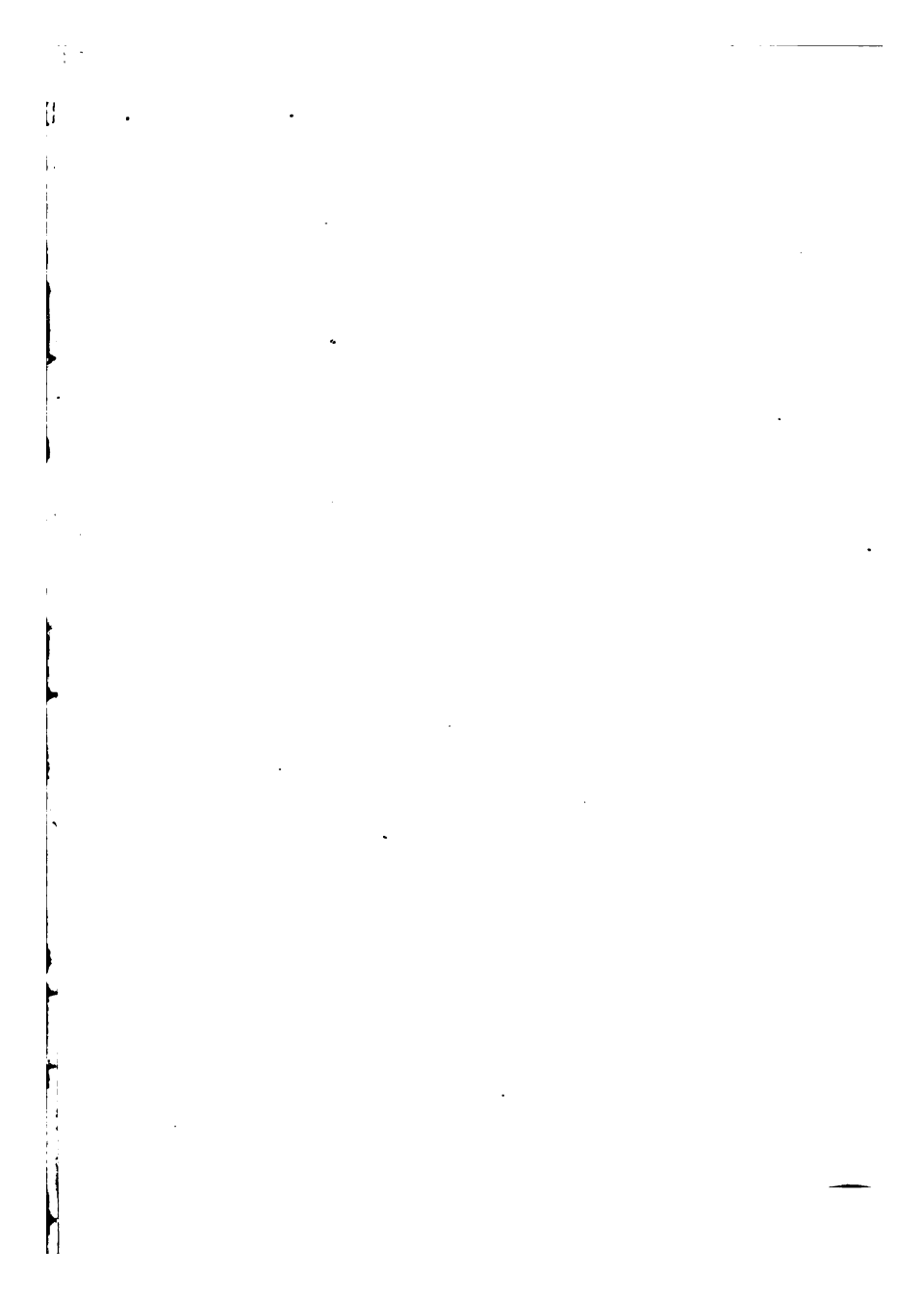
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THE CAPTURE. Page 57.

THE PLEASANT COVE SERIES.

THE

CRUISE OF THE CASCO.

BY

ELIJAH KELLOGG,

AUTHOR OF "LION BEN OF ELM ISLAND," "CHARLIE BELL, THE WAIF OF ELM
ISLAND," "THE ARK OF ELM ISLAND," "THE BOY-FARMERS OF ELM
ISLAND," "THE YOUNG SHIP-BUILDERS OF ELM ISLAND,"
"THE HARDCORAMBLE OF ELM ISLAND," "ARTHUR
BROWN, THE YOUNG CAPTAIN," "THE
YOUNG DELIVERERS," ETC.

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THE CRUISE OF THE CASCO.

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PREFACE.

THE CRUISE OF THE CASCO shows that noble natures are often more exposed to the arts of the designing, by reason of their inexperience of evil and consequent freedom from suspicion, and also with equal clearness that pure motives, warm affections, trust in God, are by no means incompatible with the greatest enterprise and the most undaunted courage.

It offers a broad field for the exercise of those peculiar qualities that made settlers of the frontier state competent to all emergencies, and puts to the proof that cool hardihood and fertility

of resource which renders American seamen most formidable when hardest pressed ; evinces the rapid growth of evil principles from inferior beginnings, and places in marked contrast the rewards of integrity and the results of vice.

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THE CRUISE OF THE CASCO.

CHAPTER I.

PETERSON ENTERTAINS HIS DELIVERERS.

THE unwonted excitement among the inhabitants of Pleasant Cove and vicinity by the arrival of Walter Griffin and Ned Gates in the *Perseverance*, bringing with them James Peterson, whom they had rescued from slavery in Martinique, had subsided, and after a month of anxious suspense, men resumed their usual avocations, tranquil and satisfied.

When it was known that an unprincipled captain had sold this worthy negro, who was universally respected, to a planter, the entire community took up the matter of his rescue, and made it a mutual interest.

Walter Griffin and Ned Gates volunteered to go as officers of the vessel, Sewall Lancaster and

Dick Cameron as crew, and old Neptune, a black, as cook.

When that resolve became known, Lion Ben, the giant of Elm Island, furnished the schooner, Perseverance. The inhabitants loaded her with an assorted cargo. It was determined, at the outset, that the proceeds of the voyage should be divided between Peterson and his rescuers, or, if on their arrival he should not be living, between them and his family.

The rescue of Peterson had not only been accomplished, but had occupied much less time than was expected, and, moreover, proved very profitable. Thus it came to pass in the final result, that those who, when they volunteered to encounter hardships and risk of life, neither expected nor desired reward, made a very good thing of it, and Peterson was left much better off, pecuniarily, for his short captivity, while the community, feeling that they had done a good act in furnishing the means, and excessively proud of the achievement, were no less delighted with profits shared by the immediate actors. Relieved from responsibilities which had borne so heavily upon young hearts, having accomplished to the full their noble pur-

pose, and happy in the esteem of the whole community, Walter and Ned, seated at the bountiful table of Edmund Griffin, were amply remunerating themselves for past privations.

"Boys," said Edmund, "you needn't go to hatching up any new vige or pilgrimages at present. I never expected to see either of you again, for I reckoned, as did all of us, that you would have to stay there through the sickly season; but now you've had such good luck, got Peterson, and got home right in the pleasantest time of the year, you've got to stay, and run, and race, see the folks, and enjoy yourselves: no more West India viges till the sickly season is over."

This declaration was loudly approved by Henry, Will, Edmund Jr., and Winthrop.

"He wants us to help him hay, Ned," said Walter.

"To be sure," said Henry; "Joe's coming home; Will and Ed can mow very well. Won't there be a team? Six Griffins, with father to lead off! Won't we make business ache? Won't we make a hole in the grass, twelve swaths going down to the shore and coming back?"

"Who's going to spread all the hay?" inquired Henry. "I'm sure I can't."

"Will and Ed shall help you," said the father.

"I'll help you," said Ned. "I guess that's all I shall be good for, except to eat. Mrs. Griffin, that custard was so nice I will take another."

"O, Walter," cried Winthrop, "I've just thought: there's a fox got a den up in the Whitney field; she's got young ones. John saw four young foxes sitting at the mouth of the hole yesterday morning, sunning themselves, and waiting for the old one to come with their breakfast. Will you help me dig 'em out to-morrow after dinner, before we go to work?"

"I can't, because I'm going out to dinner."

"Where are you going?" asked his mother.

"Ned and I, Captain Rhines and the crew of the Perseverance, are going to dine with Peterson."

"Did he invite you?" asked Edmund Griffin.

"No, father, he's too modest for that; but we thought it would please him right well to have us come; knew, that since he received so much money from the voyage home, he could afford to entertain us; so we just invited ourselves."

"It will tickle him to death," said the mother; "be almost equal to getting out of bondage; he

would as soon have thought of cutting his head off, as asking white folks to eat with him."

"We were all fond enough of eating there when we were children," said Henry. "I vow, I believe from Joe down to Winthrop, every one of us, when we were little, ate more meals there, than we did at home."

"But when I ate there," said Winthrop, "I didn't eat with them; they always put me at another table."

"I'm sure," said Walter, "I don't see the difference between eating *with* them, and eating *after* them; we're glad enough to eat what they cook."

"Where did you get that old sailor, Walter?" asked his father. "What countryman is he?"

"He's a Scotchman. Years ago he used to go with Captain Rhines, when Peterson was with him. Captain Rhines run afoul of him in Boston, and said he was just the man for us. He's a choice man, I tell you."

"He looks as if he might be strong; he's well timbered about the upper works."

"Peterson says he's an awful strong man, and resolute; he's been a great drinker, but he's knocked off."

"Till he begins again."

"Perhaps so."

"What was the planter's name that Peterson was sold to?"

"Henri Lemaire."

"And you sold your cargo to him?"

"Yes, sir; went right to his plantation, bartered our lumber for his truck. I found out from a black cooper that Peterson was there; Lemaire shut him up, when he found we were coming; but we got him out in the night, and came off."

When the company assembled in Peterson's spare room, and were invited to the table, they found that plates were arranged for the guests alone, it being the evident intention of Peterson and his family to wait upon them.

"That won't do, James," said Captain Rhines; "you must fix that table over again, and eat with us: this is a family party. Do you remember when the Denmark started a butt, and went down under us, and you, I, and Dick, here, were fourteen days in the boats, with thirteen others?"

"Yes, massa."

"We had no trouble about eating together then,—what little we got,—and we shan't have now."

This matter being arranged to the captain's satisfaction, he said,—

“It has always been a puzzle to me why a man as smart as you are didn't make his escape before the boys got there : indeed, I had great fears that it would be found, on their arrival, that you were dead, and for no other reason than because I thought a man like you would have given them leg bail. I knew there were vessels often going to Lemaire's plantation, and thought you might get on board of some of them ; it was not far from there to Trinity Bay, where there are plenty of vessels, or you could have made your way to Martinique.”

“Wal, Massa Rhines, cap'n dey no like de black man 'board ; 'fraid it be found out ; planters all down on 'em, spile dere trabe, kill 'em ; dey no like go thar 'gin. Stow yourself away, dey find you, gib you up ; Peterson know dat. S'pose I say to cap'n, 'You take me wid you ;' den cap'n tell planter, 'Dat nigger ob yours want me carry him off ;' den planter he watch me bery sharp. Peterson tink 'bout all dem ere tings. Lemaire, he use me well ; plenty eat and drink ; no say noting to Peterson ; neber strike me wid de whip. Lemaire say, 'Peterson, you work holidays, me pay you.' I

say, 'Yes, massa,' 'cause I know money help me get away: den I make bleeve bery happy. In de day-time, dance, sing, laugh when my heart breaking; in de night, when all alone, tink 'bout home, wife, chillen, Cap'n Rhines, Massa Ben, Uncle Isaac, Charlie Bell, Joe Griffin, all de folks I lub so much; den in de dead hours of de night, I cry, and pray to de good Lord."

"Did you know," asked Lion Ben, "when the Perseverance came?"

"No, Massa Ben; but I know some 'Meriky vessel thar."

"How did you know that?"

"'Cause dey take me one night, put me in de prison; den I know some vessel cum. I see through de grates, far 'way, de buildin' dey puttin' up; see white men, sailor men on it; but so fur, I no tell 'em."

"Did they always shut you up when a vessel came?"

"Yes, Massa Ben."

"But," said the captain, "you must have had some plan of escaping in your head, which you were watching for a chance to put in execution."

"Yes, massa cap'n, I had de plan; one day Lemaire come home from Martinique; he bring wid him English sailor, to work wid me; dat man bery smart man, good calker, good nabigator, speak five or six language, been mate ob ships many years; but he great drunkard; so he get turned out ob de ship; den he drink more to drown de trouble; hab to go before de mast. Lemaire pick him up in Martinique, bring him home; dat man and me, we work togedder all de time, git bery well 'quainted; he tell me his story, me tell him mine, all 'bout my wife and little ones; den William King — dat his name — he cry like baby. Den he say, 'Peterson, I might dis day be master ob as good a ship as ever sot on salt water, if it hadn't been for rum. I belong to a good family; but I'm ashamed to go near them, so keep 'way, live in rum-holes.' Den me tell him how I used to drink, and how I left it off, and dat if he ask de good Lord, he'll help him leab it off. He say, 'You tink de Lord help folks dat ask him?' 'Sart'n,' say I; 'dat's what he's for, to help dem what can't help demselves.' Den he say, 'Why don't he help you out ob slabery?' I s'pose you hab asked him.' 'So he will,' I say, 'when de

time kum.' So we talk, so we git jes like brud-ders; den one night arter me go to bed, de plan kum in my head, I tink all night long; next mornin' I say, 'King, will you help dis chile git his liberty? or, if you no help, will you keep de secret?' 'Yes,' he say, 'I help you to de pint ob de knife, and I keep you secret.' 'Wal, den, you git, what you call 'em, in you chist.' 'Instruments ob nabigation?' 'Dem de tings.' 'Yes.' 'Dere is two compass in de droger; you know sometime Lemaire, he take you and me, and de oberseer up to de nor-end de island, to work.' 'Jes' so.' 'When he go, he carry beef, pork, bread for de plantation thar.' 'Yes.' 'Next time we go, we jump-on 'em, take de droger, and sail for 'Meriky; plenty provision.' 'What we do for water?' 'I know de spring on end ob de pint at Trinity Bay; no want much water for two; he allers hab some water on board.' 'What shall we do wid de niggers?' he say; 'he allers hab three or four niggers.' 'Set dem 'shore where we git de water.' 'What will you do wid Lemaire and de oberseer? kill 'em?' 'No, bind 'em, put 'em in de boat, gib 'em provision, water, set 'em 'drift.' 'But dey are both armed.' 'No matter; you watch de chance, strike Lemaire on de head, knock him

down: de oberseer, he no more in my hands dan leetle baby. I hold him fast; he no draw pistol on me; den me tie 'em, put 'em in de boat; no blood shed, 'cept we 'bliged to; if we miss de blow and hab to fight, den it's dere life or ousers. I got two hundred dollar at home in Cap'n Rhines's hands. I gib it to you.' 'No, you won't, Peterson. I'm a wretched drunkard, but Will King was neber yet so low as to take de poor man's earnings for help him to his liberty. I s'pose Lemaire owes me 'bout eighty dollar, which I must leab behind. I'll take de droger; dat's pay enough, and more too; p'rhaps when I git ober t'odder side, 'way from old shipmates, I may reform, and git a good livin' in her.' "

"That wasn't a bad plan," said Captain Rhines; "why didn't you carry it out?"

"'Cause, massa cap'n, 'fore thar was any chance to go togedder to de nor-end, Lemaire took King to Martinique, to calk a vessel's deck; while he was gone, de Perseverance kum, and I was put in pris'n; and jes' when dis chile was most down-hearted, ebery ting look so dark for poor Peterson settin' on his bed in de pris'n, tear runnin' down his cheek, no more good heart

to pray, den I hear Walter Griffin sing 'Bonnie laddie, Highland laddie,' right under de winder, at noonday: dat de Lord's plan. Lord fling Peterson's plan right out de winder: poor darkie ask de good Lord for liberty; he gib it to him; but he gib it arter his own fashin."

"You think," said Captain Rhines, "the Lord's plan was the best — don't you?"

"Sart'n; he allers does de best."

"I think that is evident enough, Peterson," said Lion Ben; "for your share of the money the Perseverance has made on her cargo, in going after, and returning with you, is twice as much as you could have earned at home; and the wages due you when you was taken from the Casco, have been paid to your family; so that being kidnapped, was, after all, as far as money is concerned, the best thing that could have happened to you."

"The money is not all, nor the best part of it, either," said Captain Rhines, placing one hand on the head of Walter, and the other on that of Ned; "it has shown what kind of young men are growing up among us, to take our places when we shall have stood our last watch and kept our last reckoning. Peterson's misfortune has just brought

the boys out; shown the manly and noble principles that were in them."

The boys colored to the roots of their hair at this hearty commendation, while Lion Ben hastened to break the awkward silence that followed, by saying, —

"I reckon, Walter, you won't care about keeping your contract with Lemaire's next neighbor."

"I hardly think it would be for my health," replied Walter.

"What contract is that?" asked the captain.

"Why, a planter by the name of Renoult, near Lemaire's, wanted Walter to bring him large timber for a sugar-house, dwelling-house, and out-buildings, likewise shingles, boards, and all the rest of the lumber."

"Your life wouldn't be worth a straw if you fell into the hands of that planter, or landed on the island again; he would hire some one to dog you night and day, till he got a chance to make way with you, and the others would help him; they are all confederate together."

"In what condition did you find your osiers, Mr. Bell?" said Walter.

"Very good indeed; they were not much

dried, and are all growing now. I have quite an osier holt, that minds me of the fens of Lincolnshire."

Old Mr. Bell, Charlie's father (as the readers of Arthur Brown are aware), had bought a piece of land adjoining his son's. It was there he planted his osiers and made a garden; raised many vegetables; dammed up a brook, and made a pond in which he intended to put his osiers (to make the bark run) when they were large enough; here also he raised flowers, — for he cherished the English peasant's love of flowers, — and both he and Charlie had now, of a Sunday morning, a rose in their button-hole.

By reason of the wounds he had received, the old gentleman found it difficult to walk from Charlie's to his little farm (as he loved to call it), three and sometimes four times a day, and therefore was accustomed to carry his dinner.

There seems to be in the English mind an innate love of the soil, from prince to peasant, in which respect the people of that country differ greatly from the French; and however they may dislike and find fault with the government, the soil itself they love, and love to speak and think of.

In old Mr. Bell and Charlie these associations were very strong; and when the old gentleman had his osier holt composed of the sets that Walter had brought him from Marseilles well under way, and his pond made, and some of the same plants and flowers growing that he used to have around his old home in Lincolnshire, he bethought himself how much better it would be to have some little shelter to sit under to eat his dinner, or in case of a shower, than merely to sit under a tree. At length, all of a sudden, the idea entered into his head, that he would have a little cot, and thatch it; yes, a real little gem of a Lincolnshire cottage; and the swallows should build under the eaves. There were plenty of eave swallows under the eaves of Charlie's barn; and was there not the best and most tenacious of clay, of which to build their nests, around the edges of the pond which he had recently made, and plenty of flies, dragon flies, and mosquitoes around it, on which they feed?

The old gentleman could hardly rest that night for thinking of his plan, and in the morning told his son all about it. Charlie was delighted; he would indeed have been ready to do anything to

give pleasure to his father; but in this, he was to the full, as much interested as his parent.

They regretted they could not build it of stone, the material generally used at home; but as there was no suitable stone on Charlie's farm, they built it of wood. As this was not intended for a habitation, but merely as a convenient place in which to deposit tools in the event of a shower, and where the good man might eat his lunch, and store his willows and baskets, they calculated to have but one room, and make it about ten feet by twelve, and six feet high; but Mr. Bell told Charlie if it was so low as that, the swallows would not be likely to build under the eaves, as it would expose them too much to observation, and bring their nests too near the ground; and as it would be out of proportion if they built it much higher without at the same time increasing the length and breadth, they kept on modifying their original design, till at length they built a story and a half cottage, with a front door and two windows each side of it, and also a chimney, as Charlie thought it would be convenient in rainy days to have a fire, and make it look cheerful; for what was a cottage without a hearth-stone?

There was another respect in which they were able to imitate precisely the state of affairs in Lincolnshire. Charlie's bees were about to swarm; they had been lying out for some days round the hives, which were the old-fashioned box-hives.

Mr. Bell instantly set to work and made two hives of straw, English fashion, and when the bees swarmed, put them in, took them to the cottage, and put them on a bench near the door, in his garden.

Although Mr. Bell was not able to build his cottage of stone, which would have made the resemblance to the one in which he had spent so many happy years in the old country, and in which he had reared his family, the closer, yet in shape, proportion, and architecture, they copied closely the form of the old cot at home, and they meant to paint it stone color. But in one respect the old gentleman was able to render the resemblance complete; that was, the thatched roof.

Charlie was now busy about his haying. Mr. Bell, therefore, was eagerly engaged putting on the thatch alone, which he could do perfectly well with the aid of little Tim Lancaster, one of

the neighbor's boys. Most of our young readers have read a great deal about thatched roofs, but have never seen one, and perhaps never will, unless they should take a notion to make one.

In England, Scotland, and many other parts of Europe where timber is scarce, the roofs, instead of being covered with shingles, as with us, are covered with slates, or straw; and the Pilgrims who came over in the *May Flower* covered their roofs with straw, as they had been accustomed to do at home, till they learned how to use the timber by which they were surrounded, and the bark of the hemlock, birch, and spruce, which makes a very good roof.

All the cottages of the middle classes, at the date of our story, in England, were covered with straw, or thatched.

Before Charlie began his haying, he had put on the roof, which is made quite differently to receive the thatch, than when it is to be covered with shingles or slate. This roof was not boarded, but narrow strips were laid the whole length of it along the rafters, with openings between each strip, from the eaves to the ridge-pole, just like laths to receive plastering, and nailed securely.

The year before, Charlie had raised a piece of rye on a burn, which, having grown remarkably tall, and been cut with a sickle, was just the material for Mr. Bell's purpose.

The first thing he did was to scatter some straw all over the roof in an irregular manner, and several inches in thickness. He then made a long wooden needle, and threaded it with tarred twine, and ran it down through the straw, between the slats, while little Tim, who was in the garret, putting it around the slat, passed it up again; thus they went over the whole roof, and securely bound the straw. This was a good deal of work, and is not generally done; but the old gentleman had plenty of time on his hands. Charlie did not want his father to work, but the good man loved to be busy, and, moreover, the labor which recalled old memories was very pleasant to him, and he prided himself upon doing the work in the best manner.

It must be evident to our young readers that the straw laid on in this irregular manner would have offered no obstacle to the passage of water. Well, this was only the foundation. He now took the longest of the straw which was in the bundle,

wet it, made the ends all even, and beginning at the eaves, laid it in the whole length of the roof; then took some rods of withe wood, of which he had collected a large bundle, cut them into proper lengths and pointed the ends, then gave each piece a twist in the middle, in order that it might bend without breaking, and doubling it in the form of a staple, thrust the two ends down through the straw, which held it securely. He now laid another course of straw overlapping the first, just as shingles do on a roof; when he came to the top, he twisted a large rope of straw, laid it along the ridge-pole, put the two last courses of straw over it, and with his needle and twine sewed them down snug, bending the ends of the two last courses of straw over each way, and fastening the ends so as to make perfectly smooth work. In the woods he found some very long ash sprouts that sprang from stumps of trees Charlie had cut; these he split in halves, shaved them smooth, and placing them on the roof a few feet apart, fastened them with the needle and twine; this was to prevent the high winds from disturbing the thatch.

In covering the roofs of barns and out-buildings,

it was customary in those days to board up and down, and to permit the boards to jut over a good deal at the eaves, in order to throw the water from the walls; this afforded an excellent shelter for the eave swallows, in which to build their nests, as they were thus protected from the rain, which dissolves the clay and causes their nests to fall. These sharp-sighted birds were by no means backward in improving these opportunities, and all over the country, wherever there was clay convenient, you would see, in travelling, whole colonies of these birds beneath the eaves. Nothing could look more sociable and interesting than their long rows of nests, with the birds darting around them on the wing, or sitting in their nests with their heads sticking out of little round holes, and some bringing clay to repair damages and stop leaks after a storm.

But modern improvements have sadly interfered with the swallows. It has become customary to fill up this space, once sacred to the swallows, with jet and gutter-pieces; and the birds, finding no shelter, have fled to the woods and cliffs, so that it is only around some ancient barn that you now see them. As Mr. Bell was

very anxious that the swallows should build around his cot, both for company and as a reminder of other days, he let the rafters run over the plate more than two feet, made the thatch at the edge very thick, and the roof having a sharp pitch, there could not be a place better adapted to the purposes of the swallows. When the thatch was properly secured, he drew a line perfectly straight along the eaves, and with the sheep-shears trimmed the edge of the first course of straw to this line.

The old gentleman now took Tim by the hand, and walking out in front of the building, contemplated his work for a time with the greatest satisfaction; but after a while the tears sprung to his eyes and ran down his cheeks.

"What makes you cry, Mr. Bell?" asked the little boy, astonished at the sudden change.

"It is the house, Tim," he replied; "it is looking at the house."

"I thought you liked it, and had got it made to suit you. I shouldn't think you'd cry. I shouldn't. I should be glad."

"You are a little boy, have never had such bitter trials as I have,—and I hope you never will

have,—and you can't understand an old broken-hearted man's feelings. It was in just such a cot as that, my little boy, that I spent the happiest years of my life. I had a blithesome, affectionate wife, and a family of children; and though the land here is entirely different (this being broken, while that was level), yet I have made a sort of resemblance; that brook, pond, and sallies growing there, remind me of the fens; that bee-hive looks natural, and my old heart warms to the thatch on the roof, like the one I was born and bred under. My little lad," said the good man, warming with his theme, as, sitting down on a large rock, he took the child on his knee, "just where you see those sallies, as it might be, I had two acres of rods growing, and where that hemlock stands was my workshop."

"What did you do in the workshop?"

"O, I had several men at work, and they made the rods into baskets and chairs (by the way, I mean to make some chairs, when these rods grow, for the cot), fishing creels, and boats, and covered them with canvas. Charlie had a little boat that I made him of osier, then covered it with canvas, and painted it, and he used to sail in the pond

with it; and he had some ducks that were so tame they would eat out of his hand, and follow him everywhere, and he used to take them into his boat, and carry them out on the pond, and then put them in the water; they would swim after the boat when he called them. Right where that bee-hive is, we generally had five or six; a nice hedge round the cottage, and each side of the door were two hop vines, that covered all the front part of the house: we always brewed the beer for ourselves and the work-folks, and made our own cheese. We didn't allow the hops to run up on the roof, because it would rot the thatch."

"How long will that last, Mr. Bell?"

"About seven or eight years, my lad, if it is well put on, like this. As I was saying, the hop vines covered all the front part, clear up to the swallows' nests; and you don't know how pretty the birds looked peeping out between the green vines."

"I should have thought they'd been afraid to build their nests right under the eaves of the house, where folks were going in and out, and children playing."

"We never harmed them; so they were not

afraid. I've seen them take a fly off the window-stool, and seen Charlie cry as if his heart would break, when, in a heavy storm, the rain beat under the eaves, and a nest fell down; but I've made these eaves so long no wet can get under."

"Perhaps they won't come, Mr. Bell; then you'll feel badder."

"I think they will; they're on Captain Rhines's barn, and Charlie's, and all the barns round. It's quiet here, and good clay in the pond."

"Mr. Bell, if you kill a swallow, or tear down their nest and break the eggs, will the cows give bloody milk?"

"I don't know, dear; I should think they ought to. A boy must be dreadful wicked to harm a swallow."

"Winthrop Griffin says they will, sartain."

"Wal, I suppose he knows. But those days are all passed, and can never come again;" and the old man's tears streamed afresh. "My poor Mary died of a broken heart, and my children, most of them have followed her, and I am sore broken with wounds and sorrow; but I ought not to murmur, for Charlie is restored

to me, a dear good boy, to care for and comfort my old age."

"I shouldn't think you would have built the house and tried to make it look like yours, when it makes you cry and feel so bad."

"O, my little lad, old folks and sorrow-stricken folks love to think over the pleasant days and times that are passed, though it does make them cry. You will come to see how that can be, some day."

"Mr. Bell, I don't want to live to be old."

"Why, my dear?"

"Because, then I shall have troubles and bad times. Everybody does, don't they, when they grow old?"

"Yes, my dear, every one has their trials; but all don't have such bitter ones as I have had. I suppose you've had some already that made you cry, though you are but a child."

"I cried when my mother whipped me 'cause I cut off our hop vine with my new knife father brought home from sea and gin me."

"I dare say."

"I cried another time, all one forenoon. Grandma' gave me some maple sugar, and mother said

she'd bake me a turn-over, if I wouldn't cry ; but I couldn't stop."

"What was the matter ?"

"I had a little top-knot chicken. O, the prettiest little creature ! She was black as a crow, and had a great large top-knot, with white on the top of it, so large it came all down over her eyes, so she could hardly see. She flew into the hog's trough to eat some corn, and the ugly old hog bit one of her wings off, and she died."

"That was a pity."

"I guess it was a pity, an awful pity ; she would eat corn right out of my hand ; I got mother's fire-shovel, dug a grave, and buried her, — I'll show you where some time. Mr. Bell, that hog has got to be dead ; father's goin' to stick a great long knife in his throat when snow comes, and I'm goin' to have his bladder ; he said I should. He won't kill no more little chickens — he'll be killed himself ; guess he won't like it so well."

Little Tim was very fond of coming over to see Mr. Bell, and helping him ; the old gentleman, who was fond of children, often gave him a few coppers, and told him a great many stories that the little fellow relished very much.

Tim's work did not amount to a great deal, for all the while he was pretending to pull up weeds, he was staring round at the bobolinks, fish-hawks, and crows, and imitating the cat-birds and tree-toads, or stopping to chase a butterfly or humming-bird; and it was, "O, Mr. Bell, only look just this once."

The cottage had been done nearly a month, and Mr. Bell and Tim were weeding carrots, when Tim whispered in his ear, "Mr. Bell, only look there."

Following the direction of the little fellow's finger, the old gentleman saw a cloud of swallows circling over the ridge-pole of the cottage, and darting through the air with great rapidity.

"They are coming, they are coming," whispered Tim; "see, there's four of them lighted on the ridge-pole."

"They don't build nests this time of year, my lad; but perhaps they've come to look at the place, and see how they like it."

"Only see there, Mr. Bell; there's two sitting right on the bee-hive. I guess they flew down there so as to look up under the eaves. Good swallows, good swallows, do come and build under Mr. Bell's

eaves, 'cause he loves swallows, and he wants you to."

They all rose in the air now, as by common consent, and after wheeling round a while, flew in the direction of the pond, skimming along its surface, picking up flies and bugs, occasionally touching with their wings the surface of the water; then separated, part of them lighting on the fence, and the remainder on the willow sets that were placed near the edge of the pond.

"What makes them do that?" said the little chatterbox.

"They are looking at the pond, I think, to see if there is good clay to make nests, and plenty of flies and bugs to eat. I presume, when they come back next spring, they will come and build here; leastwise, I hope they will."

"Mr. Bell, what makes you always say, I think, or I presume? Our folks always say, guess, or reckon?"

"You sharp little fellow, because I am not a Yankee, I presume."

That night Mr. Bell went to tell Charlie the

swallows had found the cottage and the pond, and he thought it more than probable, as they were mixed, part old ones and part the first brood of that year, he should see some of them there the next spring.

CHAPTER II.

THE BOW DRAWN AT A VENTURE.

EDMUND GRIFFIN mowed over a good deal of ground, and cut a large quantity of hay, as the land was strong, being the greater part recently reclaimed from the forest. But although there was a deal of hay to handle, and broad acres to mow over, no ten-hour system, mowing machine, horse rake, or patent pitchforks, but all done by main strength. Still as far as the Griffins were concerned, haying was a jovial time, and no slavery about it. There were several reasons for this.

In the first place, the Griffins were a hard, iron-sided race, who did not value hard work at all, but gloried and delighted in it; they were, from the old grandfather down, of a hearty, genial temperament, very strongly attached to each other, and haying and Thanksgiving, that brought the whole family together, were happy seasons, and, as

such, anticipated with much pleasure. Henry came home from river-driving; Joe, the oldest son, who did not cut much hay, as his farm was recently cleared, also came home, after getting his own hay; William, also, from the store of Fred Williams, where he was clerking it. Walter was now a large, strong young man; Will and Edmund could both mow; thus there were six mowers, led by the father, by common consent, since Uncle Isaac Murch was gone, and Captain Rhines in years, excepting Lion Ben, the strongest man in town.

I tell you they made a hole in the grass, six swaths down and six back. It was a noble sight, those five sons following their father, all ranged according to their respective ages, and keeping stroke together, while Winthrop, the youngest boy, would catch up a scythe and attempt to mow at every opportunity. When Joe came, his wife came with him, and in the afternoon the women often came out to rake till it was time to get supper; these, with the hired girl, made ten to rake; even the old grandfather was not idle, for he kept watch of the weather, and was always consulted. Although he could scarcely walk, he was still strong in his arms and hands, and being

plentifully supplied with the stems of huckleberry bushes, which are very stiff and strong, he replaced all the broken rake teeth, which were not a few in number ; then there were four strong men to pitch ; thus, having so much strength and skilled labor everything went easy. They were in the field with the sun ; but they made long noonings, had a luncheon at eleven and four o'clock, and if anybody had a good story to tell, he told it, and then they worked faster afterwards.

When it was not good hay weather, Walter and Ned went sailing and fishing, in Charlie Bell's boat, or fished in the pond for pickerel, gathered pond lilies, and went berrying. Ned enjoyed himself every moment, and both he and Walter, after being so long at sea, throve finely by their change of living.

After haying was over, they made several visits ; went over to Elm Island with Charlie Bell, to Captain Rhines's, spent a week with Joe Griffin, and then went to see Sally Murch. The boys had not been in the house before, since the death of Uncle Isaac, their friend, and the friend of every one.

"Mrs. Murch," said Walter, "you know we went

to sea right after the death of your beloved husband, and I have not seen you since. Is there not some little thing you could give me as a keepsake, to remember Uncle Isaac by? I don't mean of any value, but something that he had about his person, that I have often seen in his hands, and that is identified with him in my mind."

"I don't know, Walter; let me think. His guns and powder-horns he gave to one and another while he was sick. O, I'll tell you what there is. Perhaps you would like his hunting-knife, with the silver clasps."

"I should like that above all things; there's nothing could remind me more of him; you know he learnt me to throw it, and the tomahawk too."

"I've seen you and John Rhines practising with him by the hour on a rainy day; you cut one barn door all to pieces."

Mrs. Murch brought the knife, and put it into Walter's hands.

"How natural that looks!" said he; "it seems as though I could see him cut his meat with this, just as he used to when we went off on a tramp in the woods together."

"Walter, you and Ned couldn't have done

anything, that, if he was alive would please him so much as restoring Peterson to his family. He thought a great deal of Peterson; and nothing pleased him so much as to see young men disposed to do good, and have feeling for others."

"What do you mean by flinging the knife?" asked Ned, as they were going home.

"I'll show you. Do you see that wild cherry tree at the corner of the wall?"

"Yes."

"Do you see that knot on it where the gum runs out?"

"Yes."

"Well, see here." Walter threw the knife; it stuck and quivered in the tree, just about two inches from the knot.

"That beats all my going to sea. I don't believe I could do that if I practised all my life, and I should never have the patience to try."

"Nor I neither, *now*. But when I was a little fellow, and had nothing to do but play, I used to be all the time at it, after Uncle Isaac showed me how."

"That might turn to good account if a fellow was attacked."

"I guess it might. I could kill a man at fifteen yards with that, as surely as with a rifle."

Upon entering the house, they found Parson Goodhue, who had come to welcome Walter and Ned. In the course of an hour, Joe Griffin, who was to assist his father on the morrow, came in.

The readers of Arthur Brown know very well what a rough-spoken, though really kind-hearted and generous man, Edmund Griffin was, and how utterly impervious to religious impressions, and averse to all conversation on that subject. This had been a life-long grief to Parson Goodhue, under whose ministry he had grown up, who fully appreciated his good qualities, and with whom his rough expressions went for nothing.

On a summer morning, as the minister made his way to that hospitable mansion, mounted, not on Dapple (that steed of ill omen), but upon the noble roan colt, the gift of Edmund, after Dapple died as she had lived, his thoughts ran much upon that singular family, and the unremitting efforts he had made, with so little success, for their spiritual welfare.

"There is not," said he to himself, "a man in the world for whom I have prayed so earnestly as

for Edmund Griffin. I have exerted every faculty that God has given me to find some chink in his armor, but in vain. Why is it that the Lord will not own my efforts and answer my prayers in respect to *him*, as well as in relation to others? Those people don't seem to be constructed, or to be influenced, in the same way as others. There was Joseph. I never could get at him. If I came in at the door, he would go out at the window. He kept the neighborhood in a constant uproar with his mischief for years (no harm in him, either); but as for anything serious, you might as well talk to this horse; yet no sooner does Lion Ben become a religious man, than *he* leaves off all his nonsense, and becomes a good man. Then there was Walter, a splendid boy, entirely different from the rest; just like his mother. O, yes, a treasure of a boy; respectful, affectionate, attentive to meeting and catechism; but as for making any religious impression upon him, you might as well expect to drill a hole in a rock with a tallow candle; and yet Mr. Bell tells me he was brought to reflection in a foreign country, at a camp-fire in an old ruin. Well, God's ways are not our ways; he surely has designs of mercy

towards this household, and perhaps in some equally singular way the father may be brought in; but it does make my heart ache to receive so much kindness from this excellent family, and feel that, apparently, I am doing them no good."

The tears came into his eyes and dropped upon the bridle-reins. Dismounting, he fastened the horse to a tree, went into a thicket, and threw off the burden in earnest prayer.

In the course of the day he took Walter aside, and had a long conversation with him in respect to his religious state. When the time approached for him to return home, the good man, according to his custom, called the family around him for a devotional service. He read the Scriptures, and commented upon them, as usual; but when all were expecting him to engage in prayer, he turned to Walter, and asked him to pray.

A request so unexpected and contrary to all precedent, especially from such a man as Parson Goodhue, who was extremely punctilious in respect to established usages, and stood greatly upon the dignity of his office, confounded and electrified every one in the room. The poor boy felt as though the ground beneath him was opening and

the house falling; but the idea of refusing to obey Parson Goodhue it was not possible for him to entertain. With a broken voice he offered a brief prayer, and Joseph followed. There was not a dry eye in the room when the service was concluded.

When the minister prepared to depart, Edmund Griffin said to him, as he held the stirrup and assisted him to mount, "Much obleeged, parson; couldn't you make it in your way to call here again very soon?"

"Yes, Edmund. I'm going by here day after to-morrow morning early, to see Solomon Chase, who has had a bad fall."

"Wal, come here to dinner on your way back. We'll expect you."

The grasp of the hand which Edmund gave the parson as they parted, told the good man that the bow drawn at a venture had sent the arrow between the joints of the harness.

Upon the day referred to, Parson Goodhue arrived at the door of Edmund Griffin some time before noon.

"Where is Edmund?" he asked upon entering.

"He's down beside the river, at work. Walk

into the front room ; it is cool there ; he will be up to dinner before long."

"Is he alone?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then I'll walk down."

He found the object of his search hewing a stick of timber, who received him with all his usual cordiality, and flung his jacket over a log for his friend to sit upon.

"Parson," he said, "you know I allers speak right out what I have to say. I've been through a good deal in my mind since you was here, and I believe the Lord has called me."

"He has called you a good many times, Edmund, but you have been too stubborn to acknowledge it, and I began to fear he had passed you by."

"You are right there, parson. I allers had to keep you at arm's length whenever you begun to speak to me about my soul ; for I knowed, if I let you git near, you would touch the tender spot."

"Then there was a tender spot."

"Sartain."

"I had become almost discouraged, and concluded there was not."

"It wasn't so, parson; sometimes, when you've been here and prayed, and tried to talk with me and father, and I put you off, and answered rough, I've gone out in the woods arter you was gone, and felt raal bad, 'cause I know you was right, and meant well."

"Edmund Griffin, if you've a sincere friend in this world, I am that man."

"I believe it, parson; and the other night, when I heard them two boys pray in my own house, and pray for me, when I had been doing all I knew how to keep them and myself from serious things, and trying every way to thwart and discourage you, when you was seeking their good and mine, I felt, 'Now, Edmund Griffin, if you don't give up your opposition, and leave off running right square agin your own conscience, you'll be lost, and deserve to be;' and I've gin it up. What do you think I did, Parson Goodhue, that night, arter you went away?"

"Prayed to God, I hope."

"Don't know whether I did or not; but I went into the woods over the bridge, down into Stony Brook gully, and told the Lord what I s'pose he knew before; of how I'd been fighting agin him,

and that I was sorry for it, and had gin it all up, and hoped he'd overlook it."

"How did you feel afterwards?"

"I felt more like a man than I did before; felt as though I had done right. I didn't feel any love or any nearness, as I've heerd people tell of, especially Uncle Isaac, who, I take it, was about right, and the best man I ever knew. It was only what I'd done, or gin up; it didn't seem as though anything was done for me — that came about in another way."

"In what way?"

"I'll tell you. You know I've allers been master in my own house."

"Yes, and everywhere else, as far as I know."

"Wal, I've been proud of my strength, no doubt; but when Joseph became religious, he wanted to have prayers in the family. I wouldn't hear to't, and said a good deal more than I need to, and hurt his feelings, I know. Wal, the next morning, arter I went over to Stony Brook, I called the family together arter breakfast, and read the fourth chapter of John, and asked Walter to pray; and then and there I believe it was given me to know something of what that chapter

means. I had thoughts about the Saviour, and what he did for me, that I never had before. I thought father would be dead set agin me; but he ain't; seems quite another man, and says I've done jest right, and talks a lot with Walter. But there's the horn for dinner; let's go to the house."

When, some months after this, Parson Stanley, an intimate friend of Parson Goodhue, and like him a great stickler for proprieties, said to him, "Brother, how could you so depart from the usages of the church, as to ask a layman, and he a boy, to conduct family worship in your stead?" He replied, "Indeed, brother Stanley, I was led by a way I knew not, and I have come to feel that if we would go oftener into the thicket, look to the Lord more, and forms less, our labors would bear more fruit."

It was Saturday afternoon when Parson Goodhue, with a glad heart, turned his horse's head homeward.

The next Monday morning Tim Lancaster came to Edmund Griffin's, saying, —

"Charlie Bell finished haying Saturday night, and wanted Walter and Ned to come to his house

to-night to tea, as he had something on foot that he thought would please them to engage in."

"I'll warrant it will," said Walter; "tell him we'll be there, Tim."

"I don't see what it can be," said Edmund Giffin; "there's no game at this season; he wouldn't want to go into the woods, for fur is good for nothing now; there are no sea-fowl fit to eat; it must be fishing, either for fish in the bay, trout in the brooks, or pickerel in the ponds; this is just the meanest time of year for hunting."

When the boys arrived at Charlie's that afternoon, they found him busily engaged in his workshop, making a pair of wooden tongs, something after the form of a blacksmith's iron ones, only three times as long. There never was a boy born with such a perfect passion for pets, as Charlie Bell. His father said he was so from a child, and would make a pet of a sow-bug, if he could get nothing else. When he was a boy, on Elm Island, he found gratification for his passion in keeping vast quantities of hens, ducks, geese, turkeys, and even had a pet pig, that followed him like a dog; then he took to coons, and filled the island so full of them, that Ben could raise no corn, and they

would take the hens off the roost. Finally, to Charlie's great grief, Ben called all the boys of the neighborhood together, gave them powder and shot, and they made such slaughter among them as reduced them within reasonable limits.

One day when he first came to the island, and was quite young, he was over to Captain Rhines's, on a visit to John, who had caught a large rat in a wire trap. Charlie was delighted with it, and begged John to let him take it home, which he did. Now, there had never been a rat on Elm Island, and Lion Ben made short work of him, to the boy's great sorrow, though generally disposed to indulge him. He next got partridge eggs, set them under a hen, and succeeded in keeping them one summer, and the following winter; but in the spring they took to the woods. In these ways he stocked Elm Island with partridges and coons, so that he and Ben had game at their own doors, for Charlie, through the example of Uncle Isaac, John Rhines, and Joe Griffin, had become perfectly enamoured of hunting. But the queerest of all Charlie's pets were fish-hawks. He travelled more than twenty miles over town to find a hen that wanted to roost, procured two, and set them on some fish-hawk's

eggs; but when the young hawks came out, the hens fled in horror from the misshapen, lousy, squeaking things, and would have nothing to do with the progeny they had been the means of ushering into the world. Charlie now had business enough — two families of hawks to nurse. It took him half his time to catch flounders and winkles for them. And when they were able to take care of themselves he was heartily tired of petting fish-hawks.

Elm Island was very large, nineteen hundred acres, not more than a third of it cleared, the ridges covered with an enormous growth of beech, birch, and maple, while the swamps were full of alders and moose-wood, just the food for deer. It had always been a pet project with Charlie to stock Elm Island with deer, and have a lordly park, such as he had seen in his own country; for, as many of our readers know, Charlie was born, and spent part of his boyhood, in England. He had fanned the flame by talking it over with Lion Ben, Uncle Isaac, and Joe Griffin; he always kindled whenever that subject came up; and Uncle Isaac and Joe had promised to help him bring it about. A great many things, however, conspired to prevent its accomplishment.

About the time it might have been done, he and John Rhines went to Portland to learn trades. Then came the building of the Hardscrabble; that absorbed all their energies, and knocked the whole thing higher than a kite.

Then Charlie got married, built the Casco, and soon after the Arthur Brown: still he had never relinquished his pet project; for though he might defer, through force of circumstances, he scarcely ever relinquished any plan that he had once formed.

"What are you going to do with such an everlasting long pair of tongs as those, Mr. Bell," asked Walter; "fish up something you have lost overboard?"

"Just hold them till I put in this rivet; then they will be done, and I'll tell you."

When the tongs were done, they went into the house, and Charlie said, "You know, Walter, I was always a great hand for pets."

"Yes, sir, I remember what a lot you had on Elm Island."

"I have found two fox dens, one on my land, and the other on Joe's; one is a silver gray's, and the fur is worth a good deal. There are young

ones in both, more than half grown, for I've seen them. I want you to help me dig them out, and get the young ones. I've been trying to trap the old ones, but they are too cunning."

The next morning they started, with tools for digging, the tongs, and a box to receive the foxes they expected to get.

The first thing they did was to stop up the mouths of both dens, in order to catch the old ones, if, perchance, they were in. Then they began to examine the den on Joe's place. Charlie cut a rod of oak and run it in, to find the direction of the hole, then sharpened the end of the stick, and split it with his knife. After they had dug a while, Walter said, "I should think it was time to come to them. How do you know but the old ones saw you had been here, and carried them off?"

"They were here yesterday morning," said Charlie. He ran in the stick. "I feel something soft," he said, and pressing the stick gently, began to turn it round and round, till at last it turned quite hard; upon which he drew it out, and found the split in the end of the stick full of long fur. "It's the old silver gray," screamed Charlie:

"that's not a young fox's fur ; it's too long. We'll have 'em, if we have to dig clear through."

Their labor was greatly increased by stones and the roots of a large beech, among which the fox, with the cunning of its species, had constructed a winding hole. At length Walter exclaimed, —

"I see one's tail ; let me get hold of it ! I'll pull her out !"

"Get hold of it ?" cried Charlie. "It's the old one. She'll bite like blazes ; give me the tongs." Charlie seized the tail with the tongs, and dragged out the old fox.

"A silver fox. She's dead," said Ned ; "we've killed her. What a pity !"

"No, she ain't," said Charlie, who had not relinquished his gripe with the tongs for a moment ; "she's making believe."

"Do they know enough for that ?"

"Don't they ? Leave her alone, and she would be off in no time."

Charlie dropped her into the box, and they pulled out the four young ones in the same way ; but to Ned's astonishment, when they opened the box to put them in, the old one was on her feet.

They now returned to the other den, from which they obtained three young ones, the old ones being away.

As they were returning home in extravagant spirits at their success, Walter, who was some little distance from the rest, exclaimed, —

“What is this?”

“A fox den,” said Charlie; “but an old one; there’s nothing in it.”

“But here are fresh tracks of something.”

“They are fox tracks,” said Charlie, looking at them closely, “and recent, too; let us dig.”

After digging some time, Charlie resorted to his stick.

“I thought I felt something; but I’m not sure.”

They dug some time, when Charlie, running in the stick again, said, “It seems to me as though I felt something; but,” putting the stick to his nose, “it don’t smell foxy.” He ran it in again, and turned it round several times.

“Let me smell,” said Ned, putting his face down into the hole, to smell of the stick as Charlie drew it out; but there followed the stick a stream of liquid, blue as indigo, striking Ned directly in the face. “O, dear, dear! I’m dead,

"I'm dead!" he sobbed, falling backwards, and rolling over on the ground in agony.

At that moment the head of a fox was seen coming directly out of the hole, before their faces. Charlie caught up the crowbar, and killed it at a blow; it seemed already half dead.

"What is it? What is it?" cried Ned. "O, help me. I shall die!"

"It's a skunk," said Walter.

"Let us get him to the pond," said Charlie.
"Has it gone into your eyes?"

"I believe not. No, I know it ain't."

"Thank God for that. If it had, it would have put them out."

"But, O, I can't breathe. Such a horrible smell takes my breath away."

They now stripped off his clothes, and he washed himself in the pond, which relieved him a good deal. Walter then went to his father's for clothes, while Charlie, making Ned lie down, plastered his face, three inches in thickness, with blue clay, leaving only space to breathe, and renewing it every little while. This relieved him quickly; he then buried his clothes up in dry earth, in order to remove the smell, which the earth

will do in a short time. When Walter came with the clothes, Charlie said, "Now I'm going to be the death of that skunk."

"I should like to see him," said Ned, "and see what kind of a thing it is that can make such an awful smell."

"Perhaps we shall find some more foxes," said Walter. They dug out and killed the skunk, taking care to afford him no opportunity to inflict further injury; but they found no foxes, nor any signs of the den having been inhabited by foxes at all.

"I see how it is," said Charlie. "This fox is the mate of the one in the box, and was going to his hole, when he saw or heard us, and ran into this hole to get clear of us (it's an old fox-hole), and found the skunk there; when I stirred up the skunk with the stick, he got his share, and had to come out, right before us, or die; he seemed half dead when I hit him."

Digging out the foxes, prescribing for Ned, and making a den under ground to keep the foxes in, lined with boards to prevent their digging out, occupied every moment till supper time. After supper, Captain Rhines and his wife came in.

"Charlie, I wouldn't keep these foxes so," said the captain, after looking at them.

"Why not? The fur is good for nothing now, if I kill them; but if I keep them till fall, it will be; they are silver grays, too; at any rate, the old one is; then only think of it — they will breed, and I can raise foxes."

"It will be the most unprofitable stock you ever tried to raise; they are a wild creature, and won't do well in captivity; it will be a great deal of work to feed them, and they smell bad. I tell you what I would do with them."

"What, sir?"

"I'd just put them on Wolf Island."

"I might just as well let them go, right here."

"Not by a long shot. Wolf is a small island, with long, slim points at each end, that are entirely clear of bushes, and the sheep keep them fed down so close that a rabbit couldn't hide in the grass; the rest of it is an oak and beech growth, quite scattering, and the greatest place for mice and squirrels I know of; there they can live on mice, squirrels, rabbits, and partridges, breed and thrive like everything."

"But how shall we ever get them?"

"I'll tell you how. After they've grown up and increased, late in the fall, when the fur is good, or in the winter, we'll get all the Griffins, our John, and Ben, set some of the best marksmen in ambush on the long point at the south-west end; the rest of us string across the island, shout, and make all the noise we can; the foxes, every one on the island, will start on the clean jump; and when they come on to the slim point, the gunners will fix them. When I was a boy, Uncle Isaac, Peterson, Sam Elwell, and myself, have killed scores in that way, by driving them on to Indian Point. We used to get my father and Edmund Griffin's father, to shoot; they were great shots; but a small island is a great deal better than the main land."

"That will be first rate," said Charlie. "I never should have thought of that. Who owns Wolf Island?"

"Why, Uncle Sam Elwell."

"Would he sell it?"

"Yes; it isn't good for much. There's no harbor on it; no pine timber; nothing but second-growth oak and beech. He's offered it to me half a dozen times within ten years."

"I'll buy it to keep foxes on. It will be but a few years before that oak will make ship timber."

"That is true; it may do for you, but I'm too old a man to buy land and wait for trees to grow."

"Will you buy it of him for me? You can trade with him better than I can."

"Yes. I will call there on my way home."

"What a queer name for an island!" said Ned.
"Wolf, and they pasture it with sheep!"

"I can tell you how that came about," said the captain. "Old Mr. Zeke Towle took the island up, and when I was about ten years old, lived there in a log house; he only had about four acres cleared; the rest was all forest; a tremendous growth of oak. He used to make staves all winter, and haul them to the bank on a hand-sled for the coasters to take in the spring; he only kept one cow; but he had a noble flock of sheep. There was a large marsh on the island, where he cut thatch, which sheep like; so he could winter sheep better than anything else. In summer he fished; didn't plant a hill of anything; so what land he cleared cutting staves, he burnt over as

fast as he cleared, which came up to grass; and thus the sheep had feed up to their eyes. In those days we folded our sheep much more than we do now, because the wolves were more plenty and bolder. He had never known the water between the island and the main land to freeze, so never thought of folding his sheep; but they lay at night under a brush camp, open on the south side. But at the time I speak of, there came a terrible cold snap; ice made from the main land to the island, and a pack of wolves went over on the ice and killed every sheep he had. I went over the next day with father on the ice, and there were beautiful great sheep almost ready to lamb (for it was the middle of February), lying on the snow, with just their throats torn open; they didn't eat but three; the rest, they tore their throats and sucked the blood. Poor Uncle Zeke felt so bad he cried. I saw father felt bad, because his eyes moistened while he was trying to comfort Uncle Zeke, telling him he would stop and help him skin the sheep; that the wool was good, and he could salt the meat, for as the sheep had bled to death, the meat would be good; and so it wouldn't be a dead loss. In the afternoon

some more of the neighbors came over, and we dressed all the sheep. My father was poor ; was struggling along on a new place with a large family ; but he was greatly respected and beloved by everybody. That night, after we got home, he told mother all about it ; they talked together a long time, and then father read the Bible and prayed for Uncle Zeke. I heard them talking after they went to bed, till I fell asleep, — for there was only one room in the house, and all the partition was a blanket hung up.

The next morning father borrowed a horse and went all over town ; was gone three days, telling the neighbors what had befallen poor Uncle Zeke. Some gave two sheep, some one, some three ; the most given was four ; they were given by old Mr. Griffin, Walter's grandfather ; he was a rough-spoken man always ; but a more feeling, noble-spirited man never stepped ; and from what I've seen, I think it runs in the blood still." Walter blushed. "As I was saying, all the neighbors contributed, till they made his flock up to the original number. Father had but four sheep in the world, but he gave the best of the four. The sheep were all brought to our house, and put in

a large fold. One pleasant morning, after the ice went out, father and old Mr. Griffin took a scow, put the sheep in, took me with them, and went over to Uncle Zeke's.

"Wasn't he glad?" asked Ned.

"*Glad!* He didn't know what to do; it came upon him so unexpected (for he knew nothing of what had been going on), that he couldn't say a word; but when he did recover, I wish you could have heard how thankful he was."

"After that," said Ned, "I suppose it was called Wolf Island."

"Yes; and I shall allers think it was a good thing for me that the wolves killed those sheep."

"Why so?" said Walter.

"Well, I was a boy; but it made a great impression on me, seeing all those sheep dead; and I couldn't help crying when I saw how bad Uncle Zeke and father felt; but when I saw father take the best sheep he had of his four, and then saw the gratitude and joy of Uncle Zeke when we carried the sheep, it kindled up a feeling in my heart, young as I was, about the way we ought to feel for and treat our fellow-men, that I now

thank God for. That night, when my father knelt down to pray, I felt it was something more than a custom; and after that, anything he said to me about my duties made more impression than it ever did before."

CHAPTER III.

WOLF ISLAND.

THE next morning early, Charlie and the boys started with the foxes for Wolf Island. It was about all the island in the bay, except some rocks with a patch of turf on them, that Charlie had not visited.

As they intended to stay all day and all night if they took a notion, Charlie took a couple of guns, and borrowed Joe Griffin's for Ned, also a tea-kettle, spider, potatoes, and a junk of pork, so if they shot a sea-fowl they might have a stew.

Charlie also wanted time to look over the island, as he intended, if Elwell didn't ask too much, to buy it. As they neared the island, they perceived how accurate Captain Rhines's description was, although he had scarcely set foot on it since he was a boy. The coast line of the island was very regular, the shores high, without a single indentation that merited the appellation of a

cove, except near the centre of the island, on the eastern side, where a large swale ran nearly across the island, and at its termination on the eastern shore, formed a broad cove, with a gravelly beach; but it was not of sufficient size, or of such a shape, as to afford shelter from any but northerly winds.

The swale referred to afforded a passage to all the water, which, produced by rains and melting snows, flowed from the higher portions of the island, and imparting to the grass a vivid green, gave the cove a most beautiful appearance. There is nothing more attractive than these patches of green on islands, contrasted with the darker hues of the evergreens, the brown of the cliffs, and the blue of the waters. Here was an extent of about fifteen acres, that had evidently been at some time under cultivation, or, at least, fenced in and pastured, or mown, as the remains of log fences and stone walls could be seen from the boat; indeed, the lines of the fences were very distinctly traceable by the trees and bushes, that, taking root in the rotten logs, grew up around them.

“What a lovely spot!” said Ned, as they

entered the cove. "What a pity there is not some point making out from the island to shelter this cove!"

"The old settlers knew how to pick out beautiful spots," said Walter, "rough as they were."

"That indeed," replied Charlie; "there's many a man has the feeling in him, that don't know how to express it."

A singular sight attracted their attention, as they ascended the bank. The land once under cultivation was fast relapsing into its original state; single trees and clumps of bushes were scattered over it in all directions. At the distance of about twenty rods from the shore was a hollow in the ground, nearly square, and fringed with bushes that grew as regularly in line as a hedge, while in the middle rose a little green mound, and from the very centre of this mound sprang a yellow birch, with a short trunk, and long, low branches extending all over the hollow, and casting a very dense shade. Beneath its limbs lay a flock of sheep, as close together as they could pack, which, wild as rabbits, scampered in all directions the instant they perceived the party, their speed being not a little increased by

the screeches and hand-clapping of Ned, and the barking of Walter, who could mimic the cries of animals and the notes of birds with great accuracy.

"This is the first time I ever saw a knoll like that," said Charlie; "especially with a regular hedge around it. Let us look at it."

Upon closer examination they found that the hollow in the ground was the site of Uncle Zeke's cellar, which, in process of years, had become partially filled up. The regularity of the bushes arose from the fact that when the old log house decayed, and fell into the cellar, these bushes took root in the rotten sills, and followed the line of the cellar, the sheep undertaking the office of gardeners, and keeping them pruned on either side, by taking a bite now and then, as they cropped the grass along the edge. The great chimney being built of stones, laid in an abundance of clay mortar, this, together with the vegetable mould, produced by the decay of the timbers of the roof, floors, beams, &c., formed an excellent soil for the birch to root in, which as it increased in size, in search of moisture, thrust its roots in all directions over the surface of the heap, and into the moist

earth below, which, enriched by the sheep, made it grow apace. It made a fine appearance in its novel position, being symmetrical in proportions, and beautifully illustrated the Scripture expression, "His roots are wrapped about the heap, and seeth the place of stones."

"This," said Walter, "must have been where old Uncle Zeke lived, and where Captain Rhines came with his father, and saw all those sheep with their throats torn by the wolves."

"Yes," said Ned, "this was the house. Look here;" and he pulled out from under the roots of the birch the handle of a skillet.

"You may know it was a house," said Charlie; "see the catnip and lovage growing in the grass; and there's some tansy. But that old man must have died, or moved away from here, soon after Captain Rhines was here."

"How do you know that?" said Ned.

"Because that birch is thirty years old, or more, and Captain Rhines was quite a boy when he came on here with his father."

Exploring farther, they found the old well; the rocks had fallen in; it was full of frogs, sticks, dead grass, and the surface of the water covered

with green slime. It was evidently a noble vein of water, for a little stream trickled from it, and ran down the slope of the bank.

"What a nasty-looking place! Who would want to drink that?" said Ned.

"We've got to drink it, or go without," said Walter; "for according to what Captain Rhines said, this is all the water on the island. Let us clean it out."

"We had better let out the foxes first," said Charlie; "I forgot all about them."

Charlie had come over in a whale boat, a large one, twenty-five feet on top; he had a pulley block on the clew of his foresail, in order to get the sheet aft easier, when it blew fresh. Going on board, they took this block and the foresheet (sheet, in nautical phrase, is a rope), big pot, bale dish, and the foxes.

The foxes, when let loose, were not long in making their way to a cover, and the boys proceeded to the well; having cut three poles, they fastened their tops together, fastened the block to them, rove the rope through it, and set them over the well, then took out the top rocks which had fallen in, and found that the well was only about six feet

deep, and that about three feet of the top had fallen in, the rest of the stoning being undisturbed. After throwing out the rocks, they slung the kettle to the rope, and baled out all the water, and stoned the well up again, then lay down on the grass and chatted a while, in order to let the well fill up again, which it would not be long in doing, the spring being so abundant. Then they flung water on the sides to wash them, and baled it dry once more, then left it to fill up for good, and proceeded to make further explorations.

"I love dearly," said Ned, "to go round in such places, where people used to live, and guess who lived there; what they did, and how they lived; what shifts they made to get along, all alone on an island like this. You know I've always lived in Salem, and these things are wonderful to me. Halloo!" he cried, soon after; "see what I've found."

Obeying the summons, they found him standing by two apple trees of middling size, entirely hemmed in by spruce bushes, their trunks covered with large warts, to which locks of wool adhered, while red spots and grease on the bark attested the presence of sheep; there were a few small

apples on them, and Walter, knocking off some, bit one, but instantly threw it down, with a rueful expression of countenance, declaring it would make a hog squeal.

"I don't wonder they didn't plant any more; a whole orchard of such would have killed them."

Not far from the apple trees, they saw, over the tops of the smaller growth, an ash of immense proportions.

"O, what a big tree! Let us go to it," said Walter.

It proved to be a white ash. By reason of its cool shade, its branches being of enormous size and spread, nothing, save some short grass and moss, grew for sixty feet around its trunk. Scarce a straggling sunbeam penetrated the foliage; for, of all trees, the ash forms the most dense, almost slimy shade, while all around it, extending to the extremity of its branches, was a close growth of spruce, fir, and dwarf birch, through which the boys with difficulty penetrated. Beneath the branches of this majestic tree they beheld three graves, ranged side by side. At the head and foot of each were stones, evidently culled from the beach. One of the mounds seemed to be of more

recent origin than the others ; greater care had been bestowed on the selection of the stones, and on the headstone were cut the initials, "E. T., aged 16."

The place had once been protected by a fence, the remains of posts and rails being visible, though so rotten as to crumble beneath their feet ; showing that, though poor, the residents had done all in their power to manifest respect for the dead. But after the surviving members had moved away, the cold shade of the ash, and the dense growth surrounding it, had effectually protected the place from the intrusion of sheep or cattle.

For many moments they stood gazing upon these evidences of mortality, thus abruptly thrust upon their notice, and listened with mute awe to the dirge-like moan of the sea wind through the foliage.

"What a fearfully gloomy spot this is!" said Ned in a whisper, gazing up into the dark labyrinth of branches shrouding the mighty trunk. "Who would have thought of finding people buried way off on an island like this?"

"Death and trial in some form are found wherever people are found," replied Charlie.

"Who could they be, think?"

"Some of the Towle family, I suppose."

"I wonder if they were young or old, men or women, and what made them die."

"I don't know, but suppose Captain Rhines could tell us all about them."

"Well, I'll ask him. O, I should think where there was only one family living alone on an island, it would be dreadful to have any of them take sick and die."

"I should too," said Walter; "it must be like losing a shipmate at sea; there are so few, one is missed so much!"

"I don't love to stay here," said Ned; "let us go."

They all experienced a feeling of relief, as they pressed through the thick tangle of branches, coming into the glad sunshine. They soon came to the site of the log barn and sheepfold, where a most agreeable surprise awaited them. The walls of these structures had been built of very large logs, especially at the bottom. The floor sills and mow beams of the barn were very heavy; so were the rafters, and all the work of the roof. This roof had been covered with shingles, four feet

long, never shaved, but left rough; for some reason the timber of the barn had not perished entirely, as that of the house.

This mass of timber, all tumbling down together and decaying, made a great pile of slimy, half rotten logs, in which raspberry bushes had taken root and thriven amazingly, and were now red with most luscious fruit.

"O," shouted Ned, who was the first to espy them, and breaking into a run; "first come, first served."

The lines of the old fences were also covered with them, and the quantity was so great that the sheep could make little impression upon them. Not a word was uttered for some time, all being too agreeably engaged in eating raspberries.

"Did you ever see such a sight before, Mr. Bell?" asked Ned.

"Yes, Ned; but not often. Raspberries and blackberries always come up where land is burnt over, and I think a great deal larger and better where the timber rots. I suppose because there is more moisture. Once on Elm Island there was a great lot of brush, logs, and tops of trees left from cutting masts, which we didn't dare to burn

for fear the fire would run ; it rotted, and there were acres just like this. But it is now about noon ; let us pick some berries, go under the old birch, and eat a luncheon ; then go over the island ; perhaps we may shoot something ; then at night we'll build a fire, and have a real cook."

They stripped the bark from a birch, lined their hats with it, picked them half full of berries, and took them to the old birch, then brought up bread, butter, doughnuts, and cold meat from the boat. Walter went to the spring.

"Come here, Ned," he cried ; "see what you think now about drinking this water."

When Ned reached the spring, he found it two thirds full of water as clear as a crystal, every particle of sediment having settled to the bottom, where, from beneath one of the large stones on the bottom, the water was bubbling, causing little whirls of gravel.

"A real boiling spring ; ain't it, Wal ?"

"Yes ; taste of that ;" handing him a dipper full.

"Splendid ! How cold that is !—ain't it ?"

"Yes ; and by to-morrow morning it will be running over, and then it will keep clear. Those old people had nice water ; didn't they ?"

"Yes."

Their luncheon, as they called it, was quite a prolonged affair, being much interrupted by conversation, remarks upon the scenery, and sundry stretchings at full length upon the grass, to aid digestion. Having disposed of the more substantial articles, they were now eating raspberries, but very moderately, having been somewhat cloyed before. Charlie and Walter would carefully pick out one of the biggest and reddest, look at it in a most pleasant manner, and then, with a sigh of satisfaction, it would disappear. Ned, meanwhile, with his arms folded and eyes half closed, sat with his back propped against the birch in deep reverie.

"What are you thinking about, Ned?" asked Walter, who had for some time been watching him.

"I don't care to say," was the reply.

"Why?"

"Because, Mr. Bell, I suppose you would laugh at me."

"No, we won't, Ned," said Charlie; leastways, I won't."

"Nor I," said Walter.

"The truth is, then, ever since we came on here, and began to look about, saw the cellar, cleared out the well, and especially since we saw those graves where the original people were buried, I can't keep my thoughts from running upon them all the time. I suppose it's because I have never been on an island before, except on Elm Island, two or three times. All the time we were digging out the spring, I was thinking how many times they had come there for water, and tried to imagine which way the path run that led to the house, and thought, perhaps there were little children, and wondered if they looked into this well to see their faces ; made dirt pies around it with the clay in this little stream that runs out of it ; dammed up the water, and made mill-ponds ; made caps and grasshopper traps with those great large bulrushes that grow beside it ; and if they wasn't lonesome, with no other children to play with ; wondered how they looked ; whether they were girls or boys, and what kind of children they could be, that never went to school. Since we've been here eating, I've thought, right here under our feet, was the great fireplace, where they had rousing fires, round which the whole family sat :

the old folks spun, knit, and talked, and the children played, parched corn, made molasses candy and sap sugar; and, no doubt, they kept hens and chickens, and had some first-rate times eating them. I suppose, too, they got those awful sour apples and roasted them, put a lot of sap sugar on them, and thought they were nice, because they never saw anything better. How those little tots went fishing, and how proud they were when they caught fish, and their mother cooked them. I thought, too, what a jubilee these little folks must have had, when the calves and lambs came; how they must have loved them and the chickens, way out on this island; and then I wondered if they had a dog and cat, and what the dog's name was. But you will think I am a silly boy, a right down baby."

"I don't think any such thing, Ned," said Charlie, "for I have had somewhat the same thoughts myself, although, being more accustomed to living on an island, it did not strike me so forcibly, nor did I carry it into particulars. You are a real good, warm-hearted boy, Ned, and I love you all the better for having some thoughts out of yourself, and being interested in the joys and sorrows of others."

"So do I," said Walter.

"When you spoke to me, and waked me up," continued Ned, much gratified and encouraged by the quick sympathy of his companions, "I was reflecting how these folks, who, Captain Rhines says, were good, industrious people, are gone; the house where they lived all gone back to dust; the fireside by which they sat, a heap of earth and rocks, with a tree growing on it; and themselves, at least a part of them, buried in that dreadful, dark, lonely place, and the rest in some place else; I couldn't help feeling kind of sad for them. I should have thought, on all this island, where there are so many beautiful spots, they might have found some other place than that for their dead."

"O, Ned," said Charlie, "you are very much mistaken. When those people were laid beneath that tree, it was a most lovely spot, and would be now, were the growth around it taken away. At that time the tree stood out in the clear; the ground slopes a little to the south, and the sun travelled round it all day long. I noticed they lay with their feet to the east, and some little distance from the body of the tree, towards the end

of the limbs, so that the moment the sun came up, and for an hour or more afterwards, the rays fell bright and warm on them; and all day the sun glanced through the outer ends of the limbs, where the branches separate, and it was light and airy as could be."

"I never thought of that; but I see it is now a forest."

"What should you think that was?" said Charlie, handing Ned something he had picked up from the hollow of one of the large rocks on which the corner of the barn once sat.

"A fish-hawk's head and bill."

"No; it is a hen's. So, you see, the children had little chickens, as you imagined."

"How do you know it is a hen's head?"

"By the looks. A hen's bill is no more like a hawk's, than her claws are like his."

"Now, that's just what puzzles me in you and Walter, and all the boys here. They notice everything; see things, and notice differences that I never should think of; and seem to know all the ways of creatures, and their tracks, from a bug to a moose; the name of every tree and bush; what all the different creatures eat, and all their

cunning tricks. It beats me quite; and sometimes, when I am with you and Walter, I think I am half a fool, and that you will think so too."

Charlie laughed, and said, "That, Ned, comes from our different ways of life. You were born and brought up in Salem, a large town; you had plenty of things to take up your time and attention—vessels and schoolmates, books to read, boys to play with; all kinds of playthings—dogs, trucks, kites, wheelbarrows, and other things that your father and mother got for you; while Walter and I lived out of doors, among the trees, with few playmates, and we made playmates of the animals and trees. The greatest plaything we had was a gun; and as we wanted to shoot animals, we learned their ways; as we had to make our own playthings, we learned all about the different kinds of wood they were made of, and the use of tools; and as in our sailing and gunning we were often brought into short corners, we learned to think quick and act quick. It don't do to stop to think whether to let the sheet fly or not when the boat's side is going under. Why, when I lived on Elm Island, I loved the great maple, and the tall pine, that had the eagle's

nest on it, like brothers; they were brothers. I called the maple Will and the pine Henry, after two dear boys, cousins, I had in England; and when I had been over to the main land to spend a day or a week with John Rhines and Fred Williams, I used to be so glad to see them when I got back, I used to hug them and talk to them. I fancied they were glad to see me. It was foolish, of course; but what of it? there was nobody to look at or laugh at me; so, you see, we were always studying into such things. The trees, flowers, and animals were our books and play-mates; wasn't they, Walter?"

"Yes, sir; there is a red oak on our place, right back of the barn, with great long limbs, that we used to throw a rope over, pull down and swing on, and we had all our playthings under that. I love it to this day. Why, there, Ned, there's something now that tells me there were once children who played round this house, just as plainly as though I saw them; and they were boys, too; at any rate, part of them; perhaps the ones that are sleeping under the large ash."

"What is it, Wal? Show me — do show me."

"Do you see that yellow birch, with a great big bunch on the trunk of it?"

"Yes."

"Do you see those spruces, with just such bunches on them?"

"Yes."

"Do you see those three pines with hollows in their trunks, one above the other?"

"Yes."

"Well, what do you suppose makes all those bunches on the spruces and birch, and the hollows in the pines?"

"I suppose they grew so."

"But what made 'em grow so? all these trees right here. You may hunt the island over, you won't find any more such."

"I'm sure I don't know. What did?"

"When those spruces were bushes, children bent the tops down and tied a knot in them, and the knot grew all solid. They slivered those pines when they were bushes, and made a dead place; the bark grew over it, and left a hollow; and if that tree lives a thousand years, that hollow, made by little fingers, will be there."

"I never should have thought of that."

"You would if you had lived in the woods, and done the same thing yourself, as I have."

"Yes," said Charlie, "and if Uncle Isaac was here, with his back against that tree, just as Ned is (for that is the way he loved to sit), I know exactly what he would say."

"What, Mr. Bell?" asked Ned.

"Well, he would put one leg over the other, clasp his hands over his knee, and look at us with that clear, beautiful eye of his, that seemed to look right into you, and say, 'Boys, it is all jest so, as Walter has said, that if that pine lives a thousand years, that scar will allers be there. It is jest so with a boy; let him take a wrong cant, and do a wrong thing; let him take what don't belong to him, tell a lie, profane the name of the Lord that made him, be cruel to his parents, and if he lives to be seventy, or even ninety years old,—that scar will be there; and even if the Lord interferences, and gives him grace to repent and reform, and he comes to be respected and well thought of, he won't be jest the same man to himself he would have been if he had not done the wicked thing, and said the wicked word. So be careful, boys, and not get slivered; for if

that young, tender bark, and that young, tender sliver, that makes the sound timber, once gets rubbed off, it can never come again; the bark may overgrow and cover it all up, but there will be a hollow, a stain, a dead place in the wood.'"

CHAPTER IV.

NED GETS PRACTICAL IDEAS ON THE ISLAND.

"I SHOULD like to know how long we've been eating," said Walter. "I believe, by the tide, about two hours."

"I know one thing," replied Charlie; "and that is, if I'm going to look over this island to-day, or we're going to shoot anything for supper, it's time we were beginning to think about it."

"O, don't go quite yet, Mr. Bell; do tell me some more about Uncle Isaac; and talk more as you know he would if he was here."

"I can't, Ned. I can't think of anything now that he would say."

"How I wish I could have seen him as much as you have, and gone about with him like as you used to; but when you do think of anything that he would say, won't you tell me?"

"Yes, Ned; and there's another thing I mean to do, if I buy this island; and I think I shall, if

Uncle Sam is not unreasonable in his price, and it is as good as I think it is."

"What is that?" asked Walter.

"I mean to clear away all the spruce, fir, birch, and underbrush around the great ash, burn them, and sow grass seed, so that it will be green, and the sun will pour in; and then I mean to put a good fence around the graves—a handsome one. I won't have graves neglected on land that belongs to me, even if they are those of strangers."

"Can I help you, Mr. Bell?"

"Can I too?" asked Walter.

"Yes, both of you; and I should like to have you right well."

"Then the birds will come and build nests in the ash, and sing; and it will be real pleasant there," said Ned; "not dark, gloomy, and damp, like as it is now."

"It will be lightsome and beautiful," said Charlie, "but there won't be any birds build there, except sea birds, fish-hawks, herons, or eagles."

"Why not, sir?"

"I don't know why it is, but robins, yellow-birds, bobolinks, swallows, sparrows, and blue-

birds don't incline to come on to an island where there's nobody lives; they may come for a visit, and to look round; and perhaps a cat-bird, a blue-jay, or woodpecker may build. I know it was so on Elm Island; no birds ever came there to live till we had been there some years, and begun to plant corn and sow grain, have sheep and cattle; then they came fast enough; but there was a little million of fish-hawks, herons, squawks, and eagles."

"That's queer," said Ned; "I thought birds were everywhere where there are trees."

"There are not any birds in the thick forest; far back from the coast it is still as death."

"Well, that is just as much as I knew. I don't know anything."

"You are in a fair way to learn," said Walter, laughing, "for you've been at school every day since you've been here. I feel vexed with myself that I had not thought to bring a basket, to take home some of these great raspberries."

"O, why hadn't we thought of it?" said Ned.

"There's not anything in the boat but the bale-dish and the big pot. We might pick in our hats, and pour into the pot and bale-dish."

"I guess I can make something," said Charlie.

"I forgot we had a basket-maker with us," said Walter; "we're all right."

"But, Mr. Bell, you haven't anything to make it of," said Ned.

"I guess I can contrive something."

"O, now you're going to contrive, I'm glad we didn't bring any dish or basket. I've heard Walter tell how you, Uncle Isaac, and Lion Ben could contrive, and couldn't be balked. Now I shall see you make something out of nothing."

"No, Ned," said Charlie; "there is only one being can do that. We must take something that he has made, first, and fix it over; all second-hand with us; but there's time enough for that. We shan't want to pick berries till just before we start, so as to have them fresh."

They now proceeded up the deep swale that crossed the island; as they left the portion that had been fenced off for a field, they came into a mixed growth of hemlock, birch, white maple, with occasionally an elm, interspersed with pines and thickets of alders and willows. But as the ground rose on each side of the swale, were scattered pines, many of them having been killed by fire, standing without bark or limbs, which had

decayed and fallen ; also, occasionally, an oak. One monstrous dead pine had fallen over a sharp ledge, broken in two, and the larger portion lay on a rock over seven feet from the ground ; some one had fallen an oak across the pine, taken a couple of short logs from the butt-end, and the whole top lay dead and dry in all directions on the pine.

"There's a chance for a fire," said Charlie, pointing to the mass of dry wood.

Upon gaining the high land, the pines disappeared, and they came into a dense growth of young red oak, apparently sprouts from a former forest ; a few were a foot through, the majority from eight to ten inches, and so down, but remarkably thrifty ; and some very large beeches, evidently the old growth that had been left, as not suitable for staves. This growth covered the greater part of the island.

"Why, there will soon be a deal of timber here," said Charlie ; "it will be but a very short time before the largest of these oaks will make ship-timber. I could get two or three floors here, now, of beech, for large vessels, and beech is just as good under water ; there are two elms would make first-rate keels, and there are a good many

large pines scattered about; it is a short distance to raft timber from here to the main land; it's better than I had any idea of; but I guess if we shoot anything, it must be squirrels, for I see nothing else."

The island was full of squirrels, that found abundance of acorns, beech, hazel-nuts, and spruce seeds, in the season of them.

"Whist!" said Walter, pointing to a flock of pigeons that were scaling around at some distance off, as though uncertain where to light.

"There, there they go," said Charlie, "in that clear spot between that clump of spruces."

Crawling through the bushes, they found them among some raspberries, in a clear spot, and soon killed all they wanted.

"I," said Ned, "move that we camp where that big pine lies across the rock."

"But we shall have no water," said Walter; "we had better camp near the spring."

"Then we shall have nothing but green wood; it is easier to go for water than to bring all the wood."

"It's a good ways to bring the pot, potatoes, and other things."

"I'll bring everything," said Ned, "water and all, if you'll only camp there."

"No, you won't," said Charlie; "we all can bring them in a few minutes."

They built a camp, and made a small fire in front of it, to drive off the mosquitos and cook their pigeons; after discussing which at their leisure, Ned had the satisfaction of setting fire to the large pine, and the mass of inflammable material heaped upon it; and as the great sheet of flame streamed up to the sky, they lay upon the grass to enjoy the sight.

"O, ain't this a country! and ain't that rich!" exclaimed Ned.

"Yes," said Walter, "rather better than Providence. Here's wood enough for a camp fire."

It was now eight o'clock; heavy thunder was heard, and flashes of lightning were seen at intervals; a shower was evidently approaching from the westward.

"Let it come," said Charlie; "we're all right."

They had brought up the tarpaulin from the boat, and thrown it over their camp.

A spectacle of wild and singular beauty, that perfectly fascinated Ned, presented itself to the

boys as they sat together near the door of their camp on a high part of the island, and among scattered trees that did not impede the view. In the north-west the whole sky was obscured by a dense mass of ragged, black clouds hurrying wildly athwart the sky, from which issued flashes of lightning and peals of thunder, while in the east the sky was clear, and the moon, calm and beautiful, was pouring her mellow light on the landscape; many stars were visible almost down to the line of black clouds, while the fire, which had now partially burned down, glared red in the dark shadows flung by the approaching darkness, and the sea moaned hoarsely on the beach; at length there was a sharp flash, followed by a heavy peal of thunder. Instantly a dull roar was heard in the forest.

“Here it comes. Scud!” cried Charlie.

Scarcely had they thrust their heads beneath the shelter of the camp, when down came the rain in torrents; lightnings flashed, thunder pealed, limbs and leaves were torn from the trees; the great fire hissed, spluttered, and gave up. Two rods below their tent door, the water came pouring through the swale, which vented all the water

that came from the higher parts of the island, frothing and foaming, in the crooked channel that had been dry for a month.

"Isn't this nice?" said Ned, as they lay upon a pile of brush in the door of the camp, watching all this commotion. "Well, I'd rather take this shower here than on the Arthur Brown's royal yard; but it's my watch below to-night;" and rolling over, he was asleep in five minutes.

They were all tired, for it was not very easy work to go exploring in the woods, over stumps and cradle knolls, in a warm day. When they awoke the next morning, the sun was shining brightly, and every bush, leaf, and blade of grass glittering with dew.

"How shall we ever get fire to get breakfast with?" asked Ned. "Everything is dripping."

Walter pointed to the old pine, from the trunk of which a light smoke was rising; on the under side of this there was fire that had escaped the rain, and all around a great mass of coals and half burned brands, but all wet and soaked. Walter heaped up the coals and brands, picked up a few pine knots and cones, making a large heap; he then took from the camp all the brush they had

slept on, threw it on the heap, and set it on fire, then flung on the covering of the camp, which was dry under the tarpaulin; this dried the coals and brands in a moment, and when the brush burned out, there was the best lot of coals to cook by you ever saw.

"It is a good thing to know how," said Ned.

"Any of you seen the foxes?" asked Charlie.

"I saw the old one run from the spring last night," said Walter, "when we were getting the things out of the boat."

"Mr. Bell," said Ned, as he sat on a stone, with a doughnut in one fist and the leg and thigh of a pigeon in the other, from which he took alternate mouthfuls, "you know you was going to contrive something to put the raspberries in."

"Well, so I am; we've got the whole day before us."

"I mean to see everything you do, and perhaps I shall learn to have some sense to contrive something."

"Hold your tongue, Ned," said Walter, "and quit running yourself down. Didn't you contrive the plan to get hold of Peterson, so that he was not only delivered from slavery, but made more

money by being sold than he could if he had been at home."

"But I am of no more use at home than a spare pump."

"Well, it is all new to you."

When breakfast was over, Charlie went to a spruce, followed by Ned, who watched his motions with eager eyes, and with the pole of the axe and his fingers dug among the moss and earth, laying the roots bare. Ned saw there were a great many small roots running in all directions from the large ones. Charlie pulled up one as large as his finger, five feet in length. He then cut from an oak stump some long, slim sprouts. In the swale just below the camp was a tall elm, which ran to a great height before branching. Charlie cut through the bark at the butt crosswise for about four inches, then made two up-and-down slits to the wood, and with his knife turned up the edge of the bark so that he could get hold of it with both hands, and with a quick jerk stripped it up for ten feet. He made another cut, and another, till he had several long strips hanging from the tree; then taking hold of one, he clambered up the tree, cut them all off, and let them drop. With

these, the spruce roots and the oak sprouts, they went back to the camp fire. He then cut up the bark into pieces an inch wide, and set Ned and Walter to paring off the rough outside with their knives, which left the inner bark, or rind, as he called it, tough and pliable, and, splitting the spruce roots into filaments, put them into hot water.

Ned, who was a close observer of all that was going on, could not help exclaiming, "What are you going to do, Mr. Bell?"

"Have patience, my young friend, and you shall soon see."

Cutting four of the oak sprouts almost four feet long, he split them in halves, like a hoop-pole, shaved them flat, and thrust them in the hot ashes, to make them pliable; then crossing them one above the other in the middle, at right angles, he bound them securely with the spruce thread; he would have driven a nail through if he could have got one, but the spruce root answered the purpose. He now took a length of the elm bark, and wove it between the eight oak pieces, which spread out in all directions from the centre, where they crossed, till he had formed the bottom.

It is evident that when these ribs first started from the centre, they would be very near to each other; but as the distance increased, they would constantly separate, till at length they would be so far apart as to make the basket too open, and not sufficiently stiff. Charlie might have remedied this by thrusting some ribs in between the wattle, and then weaving around them, making them secure; and probably would, if he had been at home, and possessed of proper materials. He would also have put in as many again ribs in the first place, but as he was merely extemporizing a rough basket to get the raspberries home, he just split the original ribs in halves, thus doubling the number, turned them to form the curve of the bottom, put a temporary band around the upper ends to keep them in place, and filled in the sides almost to the ends of the ribs. If he had been making a nice basket, he would have shaved out two pieces of oak or ash square and handsome, one thinner than the other, bent the ends of the ribs down over the smaller one, and tucked them into the work, then put in the handles, and bound the two together with a thin strip of basket stuff; but in this case he only bent

around two pieces of hoop with the bark on one side, and wound them both with spruce roots. Here, now, was a basket that would hold nearly a bushel, strong while it lasted, and not bad looking. Ned was delighted.

"I could make a real handsome basket right here," said Charlie, "only give me time."

"How could you do that, Mr. Bell?"

"There's a black ash growing in the swamp yonder, which is the proper material. Cut that down and pound it, the wood will all come off in layers, and would make first-rate baskets."

They now filled their basket with raspberries, shot some pigeons to take with them, and started. The best of the whole was, they had a fair wind, and didn't have to row home, which is the general winding-up of all water excursions.

"Is this all you wanted us to help you do, Mr. Bell?" asked Ned, as they went along; "put those foxes on Wolf Island?"

"Not precisely, my boy; but we will talk of that to-morrow."

"Well, the first thing I'm going to do, is to ask Captain Rhines about the people who lived on Wolf Island, and all about the folks that were buried there; see if I don't."

"Well, he can tell you ; and it will be as good as a story-book to hear him tell it."

When they landed, they found the table in the floor, and supper on it, although it was only half past four ; also Captain Rhines, John, and Joe Griffin waiting for them.

The captain told Charlie he had seen Elwell, and what he asked for the island.

"I will buy it then," replied Charlie ; "it is worth that, if it is worth anything."

"I thought it had been stripped," said the captain.

"So it has ; but it has grown up again."

"Wal, time flies. I had no idea it had been so many years since the ancient people moved away. It seems but the other day, that, when I came up the bay in a vessel, I used to keep that old house touching on the high bluff of Smutty Nose, to clear Lancaster's Shoal."

CHAPTER V.

THE STORY OF THE LONELY GRAVES.

WHEN supper was over, Ned placed his chair near to that of Captain Rhines, and kept fidgeting about, getting up and sitting down, biting his nails, and evidently full of something that, like yeast, required vent.

At length Charlie, who was watching his motions, said, "Captain Rhines, Ned has broken out in a brand new place since we went on to Wolf Island. He would talk a week about an old brick in the chimney. I guess you would have laughed to hear him run on and tell about the children he imagined lived there. I don't know as he had them named; but he had all their plays, and everything that they did, mapped out, and I know he is sitting there, on the edge of his chair, dying to ask you about them."

"He was never taken in any such way before," said Walter, "and I didn't know that he cared anything about such matters."

"Well, I do want to know," said Ned, fully prepared to take advantage of the opening.

"Wal, Ned, what in particular?" asked the captain.

"O, I don't know, sir;" who, boy like, wanted to know so many things that he was unable to define. "You know, sir, you said, when we got the foxes, that those people didn't plant a hill of anything; only made staves, and kept sheep, that lived in the winter on sea-weed and the hay they cut on the salt marsh; but I saw a great field that had been fenced in some time, that looked as though it had been mowed; and I saw where I thought it had been ploughed, as you could see the old corn hills; at least Walter said they were."

"Wal, my boy, they were corn hills; they left the island late in the fall, and those were the hills of the last corn they ever harvested there. The time I was speaking of was a good many years ago, when Uncle Zeke had not been a long time on the island."

"Tell me about the beginning, please, sir. I like to hear about the beginning."

"Wal, Uncle Zeke was a hard, tough man, a

real good man, a great worker; and so was his wife a right smart, capable woman; but all the first part of their married life they had hard luck."

"Did they have children?"

"Yes, a heap of 'em; but they were partly girls, and girls ain't much account when a man's fighting for a living in the forest. He had three girls, Jemima, Keziah, Keren-happuch."

"O, my! what names!"

"He named 'em after Job's three daughters. They were good, smart girls; but, then, the worst on it was, they were the three first children; if they'd come along last, it would have been better; but to have all those girls right in the bitterest part of the scratch, it come tough. If they'd been boys, they'd soon got to be of some use, and could have caught fish, and hired out."

"Did he have any boys?"

"Yes, five."

"Then I was right. I knew — that is, I thought — there were children, and they played there."

"Yes, indeed. I have seen them frolicking on that beach, and paddling in the mud around that spring, like so many musk-rats. Uncle Zeke took up three or four places, and lost them all, till at

last he got very poor and a good deal discouraged, and planted himself on that island, live or die, because land on an island like that cost next to nothing; yet even that he was not able to pay for, but had to run in debt, and old Mr. Griffin stood security for him. It was then chiefly a solid growth of oak, clear to the water's edge, except the marsh at each end of the swale (as my father told me), which was singular, as the islands are generally spruce, pine, birch, or a mixed growth. He went on there, and began to cut down the trees, and make staves to pay for it. There was not, father said, any kind of farming tool among them, not so much as a hoe, only a narrow axe. No cow; all the stock he had was a pair of sheep, for there was no pasture except on the marsh; it was all woods, and he had to come to our house to borrow a pair of sheep-shears to shear his sheep. Mrs. Towle had a hen and rooster. Uncle Zeke built a log shanty on the beach, so that at high tide the water flowed around it, a foot or eighteen inches deep, and he had a log hewed on one side, to reach from the beach to the door, to walk on at high tide."

"Why didn't he put his house on the bank?"

asked Walter. "I'm sure he had land enough — the whole island."

"Because he was afraid of burning it up when he came to set fires. It was called Oak Island then, from the growth; and there was another larger one, that they called Great Oak Island."

"I should call that pretty hard lines," said Ned.

"It was so; but as he cut the trees down to make staves, he set fires, and soon had pasturage for his sheep; increased his flock, built his house on the bank by the spring, was able to keep a cow, and live more comfortably. Father said he never saw any woman in his life so thankful as Mrs. Towle was when they got a cow, and she was able to have milk for the children. The day we went on to carry the sheep after the wolf slaughter, father, Mr. Griffin, Uncle Zeke, and myself were sitting on the bank waiting for the tide. The children were frolicking on the beach with a calf that they had tamed and petted, screaming, and laughing, and having the best time that ever was in the world. We were watching them, and I saw Uncle Zeke brush a tear from his eye, as he said, 'Poor little things, I love to see them so

happy, if I do have to suffer myself.' I always loved Uncle Zeke after that, and when I had a leisure day, instead of going gunning, would go and help him."

"But how did he live in those days," said Ned, "when he didn't plant a hill of anything. How did he get anything to eat? Please tell me all about it."

"Wal, my lad, I can tell you all about it, for we were not much better off; and my father, when he began, lived in pretty much the same way. Wal, take it in the spring of the year, — for that was generally the hardest time with Uncle Zekiel, for by that time he had generally eat up clean, — when the farmers were all busy putting in their seed, he, not having any seed to put in, would catch a few fish by going out in his boat, bring them over to the main land and sell them, and get, perhaps, a couple of bushels of corn, take the corn to mill and get it ground, or he would swap some of the fish for a few pounds of pork and some potatoes. Sometimes he would have a few clams that his wife and girls had dug, shelled, and salted, for fishermen's bait; these he would barter at the store for a little molasses; then his eggs, and some-

times feathers of sea-fowl, he would barter for powder, shot, and fish-hooks. Their usual living was corn bread, fried pork, potatoes, clams, fish, and sea-fowl,—no butter or milk from one year's end to another,—except when some pigeons came to the island; but they didn't come when they were the poorest, for then the island was all woods, and there were no berries for them to eat. He would work along in this way till the last of May or the first of June, then get a chance to go in a fisherman with somebody on shares. He would have to get credit at the store for provision for his family while he was gone; and his wife and girls would come over in the boat and get what they needed, and bring over any little thing they had to turn in, towards paying."

"I shouldn't have thought," said Ned, "that women could have come in a boat."

"Those girls could manage a boat as well as a man, for necessity drove them to it. When he came home in the fall, he would pay up the store bills, which would take nearly all he had; there might be a little left to live on and help pay for the place."

"What would he do then?" asked Walter.

"The first thing would be, to set fires, and clear up the land where he had cut trees, the winter before, for staves, so as to make pasture; and now began the most comfortable part of the year."

"I'm glad," said Ned, "there was some comfort coming."

"You see, it was now the time of year for vessels to be going to the West Indies; and Uncle Zekiel would have all the staves he had made during the winter before, piled up on the bank, hoops that he had shaved in stormy weather, and a few shingles that he had got out when he came across a large pine; these he would put on board a coaster to take to Portland, Wiscasset, or Salem, to sell."

"I should think he would have had some money, then," said Ned.

"Wal, not much; it was only what one man could get out, and he had to haul them all on a hand-sled to the shore. I have seen him, his wife, and girls, all hauling staves for dear life, in the spring, when they thought the snow would go off. After the freight was paid, there was not much left for him; still, enough to pay something on the place, get some shoes for winter, and provisions,

so that he could go into the woods and work with a good heart till spring came, and he had eaten that up. Then came another nip, but not quite so hard ; because, after he had pasture, could keep more sheep, and had wool to sell, and to clothe themselves, could keep a cow, and had milk and butter, they began to live more comfortably. Then, as he cleared more land, he kept oxen and more cows, and got rid of the slavery of the hand-sled. Then the boys came along, and he began to plant on a burn, and raise corn and grain ; he made out to pay for his place, and began to live better, till something turned up that put him on his feet."

"What was that, sir?"

"Captain Hadlock, Ben's wife's father ; a smart man he was, too, keen for business, and a noble-hearted fellow ; we were great friends ; had been from boyhood. I had just arrived in Boston — my second vige as master — from Hamburg ; came home to see my family, and found him at home. As old cronies and sailors do, we sat down to talk over our viges. Says he to me, ' Ben, I've put lots of cash into the pockets of some of our old neighbors, this last vige.' ' How ? ' says I. ' Why, by carrying ventures for them.' When I came up the bay

in the coaster, I noticed that Uncle Zeke! had a master pile of staves and shingles on the bank, just where he always piled them; the thought struck me like a flash of lightning, now was the chance for Uncle Zeke. Would you believe it, boy? I went right back to the day I went on that island with father to carry them sheep. I jumped right up on my feet, and said, 'Hadlock, there's just one thing you must do.' 'What is that?' 'You know Uncle Zeke?' 'Reckon I do; and what a hard time he has had all his life; sickness and sorrow, and has had to work hard; now in his old age, though, he has good, smart boys to help him. Yes, I do.' 'Well, I saw, when I came up the bay, that he had a large lot of staves and some shingles on the bank. Now, he'll put them into a coaster, send 'em to market, sell 'em for a song; the freights and commissions will eat the most of it up. Now, you take them to the West Indies, and give the old man a rousing boost.' 'I'll do it, Ben. Staves are scarce and high. I know his are first rate; they always were; and if I don't put five hundred dollars in his pocket, clear of all expenses, I'll never try again.' 'If you do, Sam, the old man will go out of his skin for joy; and you will

do the best thing you ever did in your life.' 'Wal, it's about time I did something for somebody. I've always been doing for myself.' He was as good as his word, and better, for he put nearer six hundred than five, hard, Spanish dollars, in Uncle Zekiel's hands."

"O, that was good. How I like that!" said Ned. "I wish I'd been there when he got the money."

"That was not all; he carried two more ventures for him, and that put the old man so completely aboveboard, that he was able to hire help, make more staves, build a place to keep them in out of the weather, till he had a cargo, then sell them to better advantage, and when they brought a good price, so that when his two youngest daughters were married, he was able to give them a good fit-out, and finally to move off the island, and buy a good farm on the main land."

"Captain Rhines, don't you think, right in the middle of the old cellar, where the chimney and fireplace had fallen down, was a little hill, and a great birch growing out of it."

"I dare say; there was clay and sand enough in the old chimney and foundation to make most anything grow."

"But why didn't they, when they got to be better off, build a good frame house, and have things like other folks?"

"Wal, they had got in the habit of living in that way, and were calculating to move off; the girls married people who lived on the main land, and the old man knew when the boys grew up they wouldn't stay there; besides, they had cut about all the large trees off, and the material to make staves was the principal thing there."

"Captain Rhines, don't you think, when I was wandering about, I found three graves, where folks were buried, right under the biggest ash tree you ever saw. O, it was a fearful great tree; its limbs were as large as trees, and other trees had grown up all round it, and it was such a dark, lonesome, damp place, I didn't like to stay. Who were the people buried there? I didn't know but they might be somebody the Indians killed; it was a long time before I could keep that lonesome spot out of my mind, and I imagined all sorts of things about who they were, and how they came there."

"You couldn't well imagine anything worse than the reality."

"Why, Captain Rhines? do tell me why? I

knew there must be something or other about those graves."

"You saw three?"

"Yes, sir."

"The most easterly one was that of Mary Burroughs; she was cousin to Mrs. Towle, and lived with them; she stuck a fish-bone in her hand, and the lockjaw set in. Uncle Zeke told father that her teeth were shut fast, and all her cords set up like a bow-string, and she was as stiff as a board; that he pried her teeth open with a chisel, and tried to feed her; but she couldn't swallow, and died."

"Couldn't the doctor help her?"

"Couldn't get one. This happened right in the dead of winter, when there was no getting to the main land; the ice was not strong enough to bear a man, and too thick to force a boat through, as Uncle Zeke had no one to help him row. It was also just when they were the poorest. He dug the grave under the ash tree; there was not a board on the island to make a coffin. However, he did what he could; found a dead fir that was straight-grained and hollow, cut off a length, split it in two, and put the corpse into one half; he and

his wife hauled it over the crust on a hand-sled, put it into the grave, put the other half of the log over it, and filled in the earth. It was three weeks before anybody knew anything about it."

"That was dreadful," said Ned.

"You may well say that; poverty, sickness, and death all together, and nobody to speak a word of comfort to them. That is the history of the first grave that was ever dug on that island, and of the first journey to the ash. The second was on this wise: Uncle Zeke went a fishing cruise, one summer, to the Bay of Fundy, with old skipper Hunter. They picked up a boy of eighteen, — John Lithgow, — and brought him back with them. He took a liking to Uncle Zeke, and Uncle Zeke to him, and made it his home there when he was not at sea. He proved to be a right smart young man, and got to be mate of a West Indiaman. He came to be a great help to Uncle Zeke, as he paid his board when there, and always, when he came home, brought them a barrel of molasses or sugar, or a bag of coffee. He was engaged to be married to Uncle Zeke's oldest daughter. The vessel he was mate of got the yaller fever aboard, lost two men, and had two more down with it. However,

they went to sea, and the two sick men got well. They had favorable winds, and drove the vessel all they knew how, and made a wonderful short passage. Four days before they got in, Lithgow was taken down. The captain, who set his life by Lithgow, ran her right into the bay, and anchored abreast Wolf Island, and he was carried to Uncle Zeke's. The next forenoon he was taken vomiting, and the moment he looked at what he had thrown up, said, 'I'm a dead man, and shan't live twenty-four hours.' And he didn't."

"How did he know?" asked Charlie.

"He had seen a great deal of the yaller fever, seen a great many die of it, and knew when the black vomit set in it was sure death; everything thrown up then looks like coffee-grounds; that's the reason they gave it that name. They were married before he died."

"*Married!*" said Ned.

"Yes, married, when he was, as you may say, dying; but his mind was clear as ever it was, and he wanted to have it done. Father said it was the pitifulest sight that could be, that young creature (she was barely seventeen) standing beside John, as he lay dying (her hand clasped in his, that was

yaller as saffron, except where the blood v
settled under the nails), white as a sheet, and
looking as though she would sink into the airth.
He said Mr. Goodhue broke down as he pronounced the words, 'Until you are separated by death;' and when those in the room thought how near that time was, they sobbed aloud; and in the awful stillness you could hear tears drop, drop on the floor."

"Poor man!" said Walter; "I should have thought it would have broken him down entirely."

"It didn't; he was calm, and never murmured or complained. I thought it strange, and laid it to his resolution and stout heart, for he was a master hard-meated, resolute man; but I didn't know any better in those days, and was forever trying to find some reason for everything except the true one."

"What was the reason?" said Ned.

"The reason, my lad," said the captain, laying his hand on Ned's head, "was, that he was a God-fearing man, and when the load was more than he could carry, knew just where to put it. In those days I was ignorant of that. Indeed, he seemed born to trouble: first it was poverty, and just as

fast as poverty diminished, came sickness and death. It was hot weather when John died; the body couldn't be brought from the island; and as he had no relative in these parts, he was buried under the ash, beside Mary Burroughs. I was at sea at the time. My father and Walter's grandfather made the coffin, dug the grave, and did all that was needful. People were terribly frightened, and but few dared to go to the funeral; but Mr. Goodhue went, and performed the service. The captain of the vessel and some of the seafaring people who had been used to such things came."

"But, Captain Rhines," said Ned, "there was another grave."

"Yes, my boy, there was another grave, and I dug it, for I happened to be at home while my vessel was repairing. I was not often at home in those years, and then seldom more than a week or fortnight at a time — just long enough to see my family and get my clothes overhauled. And now I want to tell you, boys, if you have made up your minds to follow the sea, follow it; keep her a snapping while you are young; if you go half the time and stay at home the other half, you'll be kept poor all your days; smarter men will take the

wind out of your sails, and the bread out of your mouths, and you'll come out at the little end of the horn at last."

"Won't you please tell me about the other grave; it didn't seem so old as the others; the stones were shaped like gravestones, with letters on them."

"I don't care to, Ned; but I suppose you can't be satisfied without, now that I have told you so much."

"I would like to know the rest, sir, as I have seen the grave and thought so much about it."

"Wal, it was some years after the death of John Lithgow, before another great sorrow came to Uncle Zeke. John left to his wife about four hundred dollars; they had land cleared and paid for, a good stock of cattle and sheep, and were getting along comfortably. The oldest boy was in his seventeenth year; the others were much younger, two of them mere children. There never was — I say it without fear of contradiction — a likelier boy raised in these parts than Edward Towle, one of the most affectionate, trusty, obedient boys you ever saw, and smart as a steel-trap. I have good cause to know, for they had no school

on the island, and for three winters he came off, lived at our house, took care of my cattle, cut the fire-wood, and went to school. My wife and I thought as much of him as though he had been our own. As I was expecting to go away as soon as the ship was repaired, I had engaged him to come again.

"I said to my wife one day after dinner, 'Let us take the canoe, and take Ben,'—he was a child then, —'go over to Uncle Zeke's, make a visit, and see about Edward's coming, and set the time.' You don't know how glad they were to see us. We went over the place, saw how much land they had in grass, the hay in the barn, and the cattle. They had a noble piece of corn on a burn, the great long yellow ears shining in the sun, for it was late, and the frosts had killed the husks.

"The old gentleman seemed so happy, looked so strong and hearty, not a gray hair on him, and told us what a good boy Edward was, and how much help he was to him. I said to him, 'Uncle Zeke, you have had a hard time, and great trials and hardships, and gone through a great deal, but now you've got a good farm under your feet, paid for, I trust the clouds have gone over, and you will have sunshine and clear sky.'

"He then told me his mother, a very old woman, was sick, and that he had received a letter the day before from his brother, that she lived with, saying, if he ever expected to see her alive, he must come soon. It was a great journey for him (fifty miles), who hadn't been off the island to stay a night for eighteen years, but that he thought of taking his wife and youngest daughter, who had never seen her grandmother, and going. Mrs. Lithgow was away on a visit, but the second daughter could keep house, and Edward was at home.

" 'I would go, Uncle Zekiel,' said I. 'You and your wife can go on my horse, and I know you can hire Uncle Isaac's horse for your daughter, and I'll see about it. Come over to our house the night before, and start in the morning; come over in the forenoon.'

"We had this talk at the shore. After we had got into the boat, my wife says, as we were pulling away, 'Eddie, be sure and get the old folks started.'

"The next forenoon, about ten o'clock, Edward brought them over. I never saw the boy appear so lively. Uncle Isaac and every one noticed it,

for he was not a very talkative boy,—rather quiet and bashful; but that day his tongue run like a mill-clapper, and he was as frolicsome as a kitten, and went home about sundown. He hadn't got half way home when Uncle Isaac come over and wanted me to come in the morning and help him raise a sheep-house. When I got there, I found Edmund Griffin (Walter's father), and Peterson. We got the frame up and were putting on the boards just after dinner, when Seth Towle, twelve years old, came running and screaming, 'Edward's hurted; he's under a tree.' Edmund caught up the boy, and we run for the boat; there we found the girl; she and the boy had pulled for help. When we reached the spot, there lay Edward, the butt of a tree across him, stone dead."

"That was dreadful," said Ned; "if you could only have got there sooner."

"I have seen a great many sorrowful sights in my time, but never anything that harrowed up the feelings like that; his little brother Eben, ten years old, was kneeling down by him with some water and a cloth, washing off the blood that run from his mouth and nostrils, telling him that Seth and sister had gone after help; didn't know his

brother was dead ; while the other two little boys were standing crying, with their baskets of beech-nuts upset on the ground."

"How came he to fall the tree on himself?" asked Walter.

"I expect he had laid out to do a great deal of work while his father was gone ; that was just his cut. He probably intended to fall the tree between two large ones, and his scarf was cut just right to do it ; but the wind was blowing fresh, and, we supposed (for it was conjecture), canted it on to one of the others ; it lodged, and the butt shot back off the stump and caught him. We took the tree off from him, but his body was all jammed up between the tree and a great root, only his face was not hurt."

"How long was he there?" asked Charlie.

"Don't know."

"Was he alone when his folks found it out?" asked Walter.

"Yes. It seems, when he went out, the three little boys went with him ; close by there was a clump of beeches ; he went into it, and jarred the trees with his axe ; the beech-nuts, that were dead ripe, ready to drop, fell down in showers ;

the children went to picking, and he went to chopping; after a while they noticed that his axe stopped, and not hearing any tree fall, they went to see; and there he was; he could just speak so as to be heard, but had his senses. He told them to take the boat and go to Uncle Isaac's; that was the nearest place; perhaps he should live till they got back. We knew he couldn't be kept any time; so I set to work to dig the grave. Uncle Isaac and Edmund Griffin laid him out, and Peterson went right back to send some one to overtake his father and mother. It was all news at home; we ran so quick none of our folks knew it. Parson Goodhue instantly mounted his horse and rode after them; he said it was better that he should go than anybody else, and so it was. Now, my lad, you've drawn from me by inches the history of those three graves, for I don't love to talk or think about them. As I told you, Captain Hadlock put him on his feet, as respected property. He told me that he loved the island, and always expected to end his days there; but after that accident his feelings changed; he didn't like to stay. The boys grew up and wanted to go, and after a few years he sold."

"I should have thought," said Charlie, "that the family would have kept a fence around the graves, and not let the cattle trample on and the forest overrun them."

"So they did, as long as they were there ; but it was many years ago. The old folks died, and the children all settled in other parts ; some went to Ohio ; two of the boys went to sea, and died at sea, and one settled in Savannah."

"I should have put a fence round those graves," said Charlie, "if I had not heard this account ; but I shall do it with more interest now."

"And we shall feel more interest in helping you," said Ned.

CHAPTER VI.

NED AND THE BEAR.

IN the morning Charlie unfolded to the boys his principal motive in inviting them to visit him. He told them it had been a favorite project with him for years to put some wild game on Elm Island, but he had been prevented by one circumstance or another; that latterly he had seen several moose on his lot and Joe Griffin's, and that there were deer, spring calves that came to the pond to drink with the old ones; he could tell the difference between their tracks by the size; could see where they had fed and browsed the bushes; that he also saw moose tracks, and had not fired a gun for weeks, being exceedingly careful not to disturb them, in order, if possible, to render them less watchful, that he might trap them.

"I don't know of anything in this world I should rather go into," said Walter, whose very

instincts lay in the direction of hunting, as was the case with all of his family.

"I feel just so," said Ned, "and think it is a great idea."

The pond to which Charlie referred was in the back portion of his lot, surrounded by a heavy growth of timber, and covered an extent of more than two hundred acres, finding its outlet in a large brook that turned a saw-mill. Around this pond were many gullied and swampy spots, and some little feeders ran into it, on the banks of which, moose-wood, white maple, and other trees and shrubs which moose and deer love to feed upon, grew in great abundance; between those and the pond were many openings of dry, sandy land, where short, sweet grass grew, on which the deer loved to feed on their way to the pond.

"What a capital place Elm Island will be for such a thing!" said Walter.

"It is so large!" said Ned.

"More than nineteen hundred acres," said Charlie.

"A brook running through it," said Walter, "and too far from the land for them to swim off. I don't suppose you could keep them on Wolf Island a week; they would swim off."

"There is so much hard-wood growth, too, on the ridges, and in spots all over it; openings where grass grows, grassy points, and lots of hemlocks, and they love hemlock."

"If they were on any other island," said Walter, "people might go on and hunt them; but they won't care to go where Lion Ben is. If Uncle Isaac was only alive to tell us how to get them; but I suppose you have been with him in the woods so much, Mr. Bell, you and our Joe, that you must have learned a great deal."

"We have learned something," said Charlie.

He was interrupted by the entrance of Joe, with his rifle.

"Good morning, all," said Joe. "I thought I would bring the shooting-iron, though I don't expect there will be much shooting done; but 'tain't nat'ral for me to be in the woods without it. Been hunting any skunks lately, Ned?"

It was evident enough, although Joe was now sobered down, and was the father of two children, that there was some of the old spirit left yet.

"Well, what is the order of the day?" he continued, drawing a pipe from his waistcoat pocket

and preparing to fill it. "What is it about the game?"

Our readers will bear in mind that the region round Pleasant Cove was a new country. Charlie's land was as yet, in a good degree, a wilderness. He had not ploughed any land, but was waiting for the stumps to decay, and had thus far raised all his crops on burnt land. When, a few years before, he came for the first time into his lot with a yoke of oxen and a pair of cart wheels, he was obliged to unyoke the oxen and drive them singly between the trees to the spot he had cleared, take the wheels from the axletree, and roll them in, and carry the tongue and axletree.

Wolves occasionally killed sheep, bears came into the corn, were often seen among the blueberries, and in cranberry bogs, and deer fed in the night within sound of the saw-mill; indeed, it was only a twelvemonth previous to the circumstances we are about to narrate, that Joel Ricker, while sawing in the night, shot a deer from the mill, that, attracted by his light, had approached within shot. Ricker had taken his rifle to the mill, having noticed where the deer had entered and left the water, having swum across the mill pond in the night.

"As to the game, Joe," said Charlie, "there's a good many deer; some old ones with their calves, and two moose if not more, that haunt the pond, and feed in the openings round, and browse in the gullies, I suppose to get clear of the wolves, that are rather shy since the bounty was put on, and people have hunted them so sharp, they feed in the night, and come to the pond between day and sunrise to drink. I have not fired a gun this summer, nor done anything to disturb them, but have scattered corn for them to eat; they are quite bold, and have a beaten path to their drinking-place. I have put my dog on Elm Island, so as not to disturb them; but as for taking them alive without injuring, that is what you must tell me how to do."

"That is it, Joe," said John Rhines, who just then opened the door; "now Uncle Isaac has been taken away, we've nobody else to look up to in the hunting line."

"If," said Joe, who, having got his pipe going, was composedly smoking, "you calc'late to find Uncle Isaac in me, a man who had the wit and pluck of half a dozen white men, with all the craft of an Indian to boot, you'll find yourselves

mistaken. 'Bout taking this game alive ; it's something never done in these parts. It might be done in winter, by tiring them out in the deep snow and crust, running them down with dogs, and driving the dogs off before they could tear them much ; but summer time, I'm doubtful, I am ; still these calves are kind of foolish ; you say they've got bold. Is there more than one place where they come to drink ?”

“ Yes ; two.”

“ Are they nigh together ?”

“ No ; one at the north-east, and the other at the south-west end of the pond ; the whole length of it apart.”

“ That is favorable, because we can work with 'em in one place without disturbing 'em in the other ; again, they don't know anything about snares, while they are used to dogs and guns.”

“ Couldn't we set a noose ?” asked Walter.

“ That would choke 'em to death,” said John.

“ Father has got a bear trap,” said Joe ; “ there's another up to the widow Murch's. Let us tie down one spring, muffle the jaws, so as not to break their legs, set them both in the trail to the drinking-place, at the south-west end, cover 'em

with earth and leaves; they will hold a young deer at any rate; but if a moose gets in, he'll get clear, and you'll never see that moose round that pond again."

"We'll do it," said Charlie.

"We must lie by and take 'em as soon as they are caught, or they'll struggle and wring their hips out of joint, break their legs, and make such a noise as to scare the rest."

The traps were procured and set. As they lay in the woods, concealed in brush, covered with blankets, and keeping alternate watch, John, in his watch, heard a single deer pass along the path, his light tread scarcely perceptible; in a few moments the click of the trap was heard, instantly followed by a great threshing, and the sharp rattle of the chain; and then all was still as before. He roused Joe as easily as possible, without waking the rest. When they reached the spot, they found a deer calf, caught by both hind legs, and completely wedged between two trees, which nipped him just back of the fore shoulders, while the trap and chain held his hinder parts fast, that he could not move an inch. Having first tied his legs, and taken off the trap, they, without attempting to re-

set it, covered it with leaves, and taking the animal some little distance into the woods, fastened him, so he could not make the least noise.

"He ain't hurt a mite," said Joe, "and, as he came alone, hasn't frightened the rest. It don't lack more'n an hour to day; we'll set up till then."

At daylight the others waked. Taking for granted that, if anything had been caught, Joe or John would have called the rest, Charlie said,

"Nothing to-night. Well, we can't expect to get anything the first night; we must have patience."

"Hist!" said Joe; "now is just the time, if ever. Hark!"

They soon heard the tread of deer, and saw indistinctly through the trees the forms of two; but no other sound was heard.

"They've stepped over them," said Charlie; "strange that they should step over both; they must have reached the water by this time."

At length a heavy tread was heard, like that of a horse — thump, thump.

"Is it a bear?" whispered Ned to Joe.

"A moose. I hope he won't get in, for the trap

won't hold him, and he'll scare away all the deer for a week; perhaps always."

The moose, however, stepped by.

"Here they come back," whispered Joe to John.

"It is an old deer," said John; "I can see her plain; the calf must be behind."

In another instant the click of the trap was heard, the form glided from view, and a heavy plunge and splashing of water were heard.

"There goes the moose into the pond," said Joe; "but we've got another calf."

The deer, caught by one fore leg, had wound the chain of the trap around a tree, and, worn out with his struggles, was on his knees, panting heavily. He was secured without essential injury.

"I'm going to look at the other trap," said Charlie.

"I would," said John.

To his great amazement, it was not to be found.

"It's gone," he cried; "chain and all."

"I'll wager," said John, "the moose carried it off."

"Let us look for it," said Joe; "it is too good a trap to lose; help me look for it, Charlie."

Joe led him along till he fairly stumbled over the body of the first deer.

"How do you feel now?" asked Joe; "thankful to the Lord and grateful to your neighbors?"

The deer were hauled home in a cart, and put in a stall in the barn.

"A buck and a doe," said Joe; "and only a little skin rubbed off their legs."

They sat down to breakfast in high spirits.

"Tain't any use to set them traps to-night," said Joe.

"Why not?" said Ned.

"'Cause that moose and that old deer will tell the rest on 'em; must wait a while, till they forget it."

"Won't they come to the pond?"

"Yes; but they won't come in that path, right away. We must try something else."

"Couldn't we make a pitfall?" asked Ned. "I've read of such things."

"I've heard Captain Rhines tell about their taking elephants so," said Charlie.

"Joe, you ought to know something about that matter," said John, "for that was the way in which you caught Parson Goodhue's mare, when

she got into your cornfield, and beat her to a jelly."

"Who told you that, Mr. Impertinence?"

"A striped squirrel; didn't you see one on the log fence, with a spruce bud in his mouth?"

"There's very little dependence to be put in anything a striped squirrel says; they are thieves, mischief-makers, and great liars."

Charlie was so delighted with the prizes, that after eating his breakfast, he went out to look at them again. They ran up in a corner, and stood trembling, and had not touched the grass he had thrown over to them.

"Joe, how shall I ever get them to eat?"

"You can't expect to make them tame in a minute — critters stark, staring wild out of the woods, and their legs barked in a trap. Put a weaned calf in with them; they'll be afraid of him at first, but after a while, when they see him eating, and hear him grinding the hay, they'll come to the crib, and eat with him."

After they had made up their sleep, Joe said, "Come, let us go and take a look at some of them openings and gullies round the pond."

In the course of their explorations, they came

to a sandy knoll that rose up between two ravines, and fell off towards the pond ; here were abundant signs of deer ; the grass was cropped, the ground covered with their droppings, the trees on the edges of the gullies browsed, and one lone poplar, that stood near the highest part of the knoll, was nearly stripped of its bark by their teeth, and the ground around its roots poached by their hoofs.

"Is there many wolves round here now, Charlie?"

"I guess not."

"I reckon these calves both belong to that old deer we saw. She'll be lonesome to-night, and be sarching round. It's my opinion, that, if we tie a calf to this tree, and dig the pit round it, the calf will tole the old deer or some other ; that is, if you'll risk the calf."

"I will," said Charlie ; "for the wolves have been hunted so sharp, that I have not put my sheep in the fold this three weeks."

They dug the pit in a circle round the tree, hauling all the earth into the pond, laid a plank across it, and led one of the calves over it to the tree, and fastened him. Then they covered the pit with a framework of poles and twigs, too frail

to bear a deer, and shaving with long knives much of the soil from the turf they had taken off, replaced it carefully. The ground on the knoll was covered in many places with dried leaves blown from the trees on the edge of the ravines ; these they strewed over the turf to cover the joints. But to their great chagrin, the deer came and walked directly towards the tree, then stopped, put her nose to the ground, snuffed, put out one forefoot cautiously, drew it back, put out the other, then with a jerk of her tail ran off, then returned, and walked round her calf till daylight, but refused to tread on the trap.

"She knows too much for us," said Joe ; "she felt it tremble, or smelt us. I see how it is. You must have the trap in a trail where they are used to going, or must rush them on to it, when they haven't time to smell of and try it. I'll have that deer, though."

"How ?" said John.

"Don't you see her tracks where she has been round and round at the very edge of the hole, just as near to the calf as she could get ?"

"Yes."

"Well, we'll set three traps right in that ring ;

to-morrow night, when she comes, she'll run round in the same tracks, or very near, because she's tried it, thinks it's all right, and we'll have her."

"What's the use of sitting up?" said Ned, whose ardor was somewhat cooled by the last night's watching and disappointment.

"There's no need," said Joe. "We can't afford to watch two nights running."

They visited the pit the next morning before sunrise. As they approached, they saw that the calf was still fast to the tree, but quivering with fear. Ned, ever eager and impulsive, ran before the rest, exclaiming, as he reached the spot, "The deer is caught, and has tumbled into the pit;" but in his eagerness to see, he stepped too far, and fell in head foremost.

There instantly rose from the pit a succession of the most horrible screams.

"O, O! Walter, help!"

"O, O!" chimed in Walter, who, forgetting the bear trap set the night before, in his haste to see what was the matter with Ned, had just put his foot in one, and was caught by the leg.

"Hold your tongue, you goose!" cried Joe, who, followed by John, ran to relieve Walter; "the deer won't bite you."

"It's a bear," screamed Ned. "I shall be eat up."

Joe and John pressed down the spring and opened the jaws of the trap.

"Has it broken your leg?" said Joe, who saw very little need of attending to Ned.

"No; but it would, if I had not had on a sea-boot."

Ned now came out of the pit, by the aid of the chain of the trap, bareheaded and pale with fear.

"I believe there is a bear and a deer both," said Charlie, getting down on his knees and looking in at the opening, still more enlarged by the descent and ascent of Ned.

"To be sure there is. I guess you'd think there was, if you'd been in his very jaws, as I was," said Ned, wiping the sweat of mortal fear from his brow.

"*A bear!* That's a likely story," said Joe.

"You'd better jump in and see," said Ned.

"We'll soon find out," said John, beginning to remove the covering. A strange sight now presented itself. At the bottom of the pit lay the deer, with one hind leg in the trap, spell-bound with fear, and at a short distance from him sat a

full-grown bear on his haunches, winking and blinking, every whit as frightened as the deer. Ned had tumbled down on his hands and knees, and upon getting up, looked the bear square in the face ; but the brute was far too much occupied with his own affairs, and in speculations concerning his probable fate, to pay the least attention to Ned or the deer.

"How came that bear there?" asked Charlie. "O, ain't I glad ! I've always wanted a bear ever since I heard Uncle Isaac tell about one he had, that died of butter."

"I expect," said Joe, "the deer came to see her calf, and got caught, and then the bear made a spring at her, and both fell in together. The deer's leg ain't broke ; the next thing is to get her out without hurting her. I'll get down there."

"Get down there, where that bear is ! You shan't," said Charlie.

"A fig for the bear !" and Joe jumped down into the pit, and taking the deer in his arms, lifted her up, so that the others got hold of her legs and took her out. The creature was entirely limp and helpless in the arms of Joe, as though dead ;



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but the moment it was placed upon the grass, it struggled violently.

"There," said Ned "is my hat, right under the bear's nose. You can see how near I was to him."

"Near to him!" said Joe, and picking up the hat, he stuck it on the bear's head, who only winked.

"Don't he look comical?" said Walter, who sat at the edge of the pit rubbing his leg.

"Isn't he a beauty?" said Charlie. "See how clean and slick his fur is, and what handsome eyes he's got. I wish I had a mate for him."

"I guess he'll give you all the trouble you'll want," said Joe. "I tell you he looks like Joe Foss when he's about half drunk, and sitting in the oat trough before Fred's store."

The bear now gave the hat a brush with his paw, and it rolled at Joe's feet.

"He don't like to be made fun of; it hurts his feelings," said Joe, picking up the hat, and flinging it up to Ned. John and Charlie then reached their hands to him, and pulled him out.

"Where shall I put this bear?" said Charlie.

"I should keep him where he is," said Joe.

"But I wanted to have him at the house in a

cage in the barn, where I could have him handy to feed."

"That bear is in a maze now, and frightened out of his wits, and you can spit in his face; but when he comes to, it will be another matter. Why, that fellow would stave in the head of a barrel with one stroke of his paw. You'd want a strong cage to hold him."

"Well, I've got timber enough to make one that half a dozen bears couldn't break."

"How could you get him into it?" asked Ned.

"Bring the cage here," said Charlie; "dig one end of the pit slanting, put the cage there, and drive him in."

"It's easy to contrive ways to handle him, and put a ring in his nose," said Joe, "but he's too old to make a pet of. You would have to keep him chained, or caged. He would always be savage, and kill somebody, or tear a child to pieces, when you least thought of it; always be uncertain. You must get a cub, if you want a pet. I'd keep him here, if you must keep him; then, if you get tired of him, in the fall, when his fur is good and he's fat and good eating, you can kill him."

"Won't he dig out?"

"They can't dig, like a dog or fox. I suppose after a while he would stand on his hind legs, and paw the edge down, so as to get out; but I should drive him into one side, dig the other side of the place straight, a little deeper, set posts, and plank up the sides, cover the top, and drive him back; then he would have the ground under him, and you could have two parts, parlor and kitchen. He'd keep himself as neat as a pin, fit to receive company when you wanted to show him off to folks that came to see you. Perhaps you can catch a she one in a trap; or I shouldn't wonder if he toled bears here; then you could raise your own bears."

"I'll tell you what I'll do, Joe, as sure as I'm a live man; and I want you to go in with me; now do, Joe, that's a good fellow. Where were my wits, that I never thought of it before?"

"Well, what is it? You are more of a boy than when you tried to burn me up on Elm Island."

"Let us — you, and I, and John; and we'll get your father to help us — set traps, and try every way to get some live bears, and put 'em on Wolf Island. I've bought it, and they will breed there, and we can have such a good time seeing and

hunting them when we get enough. I can buy some cubs; you and the folks round here most always get some every year."

"But you can't put sheep on there if you have bears?"

"I don't want to. I mean to let it grow up."

"What are the bears going to live on? It takes a good deal to pasture a lot of bears; the island is not very large, and there is no game for them to kill."

"You know they den all winter."

"Ay, but the summer."

"There's plenty of blueberries—oceans of them; raspberries, blackberries, partridge berries, pigeon plums, and any quantity of acorns, beech-nuts, and grass; they eat some grass."

"But what are they going to do in the spring and first of the summer, before these things come, in a small range?"

"There's ground-nuts, hazel-nuts that are left on the bushes and ground, wild turnips, and roots of flags; and, you know, they'll browse in the spring some, just like deer, and eat the ends of pine limbs."

"But they must have meat."

"Well, there's lots of mice, and plenty of wind-falls, rotten, and full of wood-worms."

"That indeed."

"Then there's horse-shoe crabs, winkle, and plenty of clams lying on the beach, where the fishermen dig bait; and they know how to get flounders, eels, and lobsters, on the flats at low water."

"But the range is small," said Joe. "In the forests, bears go miles and miles, picking up a little here, and a little there; on that island there is not much flats; the shores are bold."

"Well, how much work would it be for you, John, I, and all your boys, to go on there, and build a wear in the creek, to catch flounders, lobsters, menhaden, and herring; then the bears could help themselves; also smelts that come early could be caught. I could get Fred Williams to help us, Peterson and his boys, and Sam Haddock. Why, we could do it in a day; cut the brush, set the stakes, and build the wear."

"Well, I'll help you; but let us get the bears first; at any rate, make sure of this one. A bear ain't a bad swimmer; however, I don't think they'd swim off, unless they were hunted sharp."

John went to making spikes to fasten the plank, as all spikes and nails were made by hand then.

Instead of driving the bear from his quarters, they dug out the opposite side of the circular pit. But when they had made the pen and attempted to drive him into it, he refused to go ; when they beat him with poles, he snapped and snarled, took the poles away from them, and broke them with a stroke of his paw, and came near pulling Charlie into the pit, which, in Bruin's present mood, would not have been a very safe location.

"I'll fix him," said Joe ; and putting a light charge of powder in his gun, he fired it close to his muzzle, upon which he ran into the pen with all expedition.

CHAPTER VII.

A MOOSE IN A HERRING NET.

"I SUPPOSE you are satisfied now, Charlie," said Joe, when they sat down to eat at nine o'clock in the evening, having been busily at work since sunrise; "you've got a buck and two does, besides the bear that you didn't calc'late on getting at all."

"O, no," said Charlie.

"But I've got some salt marsh to cut," said Joe, "and ought to be at it."

"I do want to get a moose. There's a bull moose and two she ones haunt the other end of the pond; and I should like to get another deer; they never will be so tame again, because people will begin to hunt them when the weather comes cool. If you'll come once or twice more, I'll help you get your salt hay."

"I would a good deal rather you would put some timbers in my boat. Suppose I go to work

on the marsh to-morrow and next day, and you go to work on the boat; by that time Walter's leg will be so he can go with us, and if we've scared the game any, they'll kind of get over it."

"That will be just the thing; to-morrow is Friday; that will give Walter till Monday."

"I shall be all right by that time," said Walter.

"You don't know how much I want a moose, Joe. That morning we were going in the woods, and I heard his heavy tread, thump, thump, heard him go souse into the water, looked after him, and saw him come out and shake himself, he looked so big and grand, the sun shining on his flanks, and the water glistening and running off in streams, I tell you, I thought if I could only get that moose!"

"If you got him," said Joe, "you'd want another just as much."

"To be sure; I want a pair."

"Well, now, I tell you, a bull moose that will weigh eight or ten hundred ain't a very nice feller to handle. I've had somewhat to do with 'em, and, get one penned up, I'd about as lives tackle a bear."

When, upon coming together again, they began

to look over the ground at the north-east end, this place, being farther removed from any clearing, and abounding, around the head of the pond, with hard-wood growth, and interval, caused by the beavers having dammed a brook that ran into it, was the chief resort of moose and deer. Here was a beaten path leading to the brook.

"Look there," said Joe, pointing to the place where the path met the brook, and which was hard trampled by the feet of the game; "they like the running water of this brook better than that of the pond, and come here to drink."

In the course of their examinations they found the remains of the old beaver dam, which still stopped sufficient water to form a shallow pond, from eighteen inches to three feet in depth, completely hidden by a thick growth of willow, alders, and yellow birches, whose long branches extended far over the water. Joe waded into this pond, and carefully examined the bottom.

"If there's been one moose here," said he, "there's been half a dozen. They come here in the heat of the day, and stand in the water, and chew their cud, and cool themselves, and get rid of the flies which torment 'em. I can see their track on

the bottom. I tell you they take clear, sheer comfort here. See how they browse these trees."

"Then why couldn't we set traps here in the water?" said John; "they couldn't help stepping in them."

"They wouldn't hold a moose," said Charlie.

"No," said Joe; "but I'll tell you what they would do: they would bother one awfully, and that's what we'll do — set three traps here, cover them with mud, and not fasten 'em; if we did, the moose would pull his leg out. Let him run with it; he can't get away from us on three legs; he'll soon tire out lugging that trap, and we can catch him. I reckon, by the sun, it's near five o'clock; we'll go home, get supper, and set the trap again to-morrow noon."

After the traps were set, Charlie said, "Now, Joe, I don't see as we can do any more till to-morrow, in the heat of the day."

"No; but we must get here early, before the critters come from their feeding, so as to be ready to foller up, if one is caught. Now, I've been thinking, if you were a mind, all hands of you, to pole my hay off the marsh, I'd come out here and lay by. I'll come in the dead of the night, when

they'll be asleep. I reckon I can get here better than you ; and the fewer, the less disturbance. I'll take a blanket and lay till noon, or afternoon. If the trap springs I'll caw like a crow once, then scream like a blue-jay, then like a crow again ; and when you hear that you can drop everything and run ; I'll make the trail broad enough for you to follow."

Joe, however, instead of going in the night, went about dusk, as he found there was a strong breeze blowing, which would prevent the game from scenting him, and, practised from boyhood in all manner of woodcraft, crept cautiously to reach a covert, without disturbing the moose.

"It's rather more comfortable laying here," said Joe, as, just after sunrise, he began to eat, "than mowing thatch, wading in mud, and poling it off the marsh."

There were plenty of crows yelling, and often did the boys pause in their work to listen ; they had also engaged Joe's wife to keep her ears open. As the forenoon wore away their anxiety increased ; still no signal. The horn blew for dinner. As Charlie was washing at the open window, he heard the cawing of a crow.

"That's got to be an old story," said John.

It ceased, and in a few moments there came the cry of a jay. The towel dropped from Charlie's hand; he held his breath; then succeeded the cawing of the crow. Charlie leaped through the open window, followed by all the rest.

Sally Griffin, with her dinner all on the table, smoking hot, stood waiting for them to come in from the kitchen, for she had set out the table in the spare room, when, happening to look out of the door, she saw them disappearing in the edge of the woods.

"I vow to man!" she exclaimed, really vexed; "if it ain't too bad! Here I've slaved myself all the forenoon, het the oven, killed chickens, baked biscuits and an Indian pudding; and now they're off. I heard the crows holler, but didn't dream they would leave the dinner on the table. I wish there wasn't a moose in the world; and there's no knowing when they'll be back."

When the boys reached the pond, they found the water all roily, and branches stripped from the trees, where the moose had floundered through them; but as they came to the high, clear ground, they lost the track.

"He must be caught by a fore leg," said Walter, "and is holding up the trap, and running on three legs."

"What is this?" said Ned, pointing to a place where the turf was broken.

"That is the mark of the trap, where he hit it on the ground," said Charlie.

"What is that white place on that tree, in the edge of the woods?"

It proved to be where Joe had cut the bark from a pine with his hunting-knife; they found small branches lopped, and trees barked, all along, for more than a mile.

They then began to shout. At length an answer came faintly back in the distance, and then they soon caught sight of Joe.

"He's most tired out," said Joe, as they came up; "I can keep up with him easy, and he strikes the trap quite often."

They could now hear the creature's tread.

"If we can hear him, he can hear us," said Joe; "let's stop."

The moment they stopped the moose stopped.

"I thought so. He's well winded; it's the trap that's done it. Now we'll start."

When they started the moose started.

"Stop again," said Joe.

The moose also stopped.

"Now I'll tell you what we'll do. I'll get ahead of that moose, and drive him towards home; 'twill be a terrible job to get cattle through the woods to haul him. I've hunted over this ground, and know every inch of it; you stay here and keep watch till you hear him going back."

They were near a ravine; Joe crept silently into it, and making a circuit, got ahead of the game. By and by they heard the tread of the moose going towards the pond, and following the sound, came upon the trail, and joined Joe.

At length they could track him by drops of blood on the dry leaves, and got sight of him, as they drew near the pond.

The animal, not willing to leave the cover of the woods, as they came to an opening, made a stand beneath a large hemlock. When the party approached, he reared himself on his hind legs, holding the trap in the air.

"Look out for them fore legs," said Joe; "if any one gets a clip from the crittur's foot, or that trap, it will crack his skull. But he's ours; he

can't do anything with that trap, and can't face us all at once."

"Let us clinch him," said John Rhines, who was now considered the strongest man in the place, except Lion Ben.

"Charlie," said Joe, "you and Ned just get his attention in front; make motions at him. John and I will make a rush and grab both hind legs, Walter clinch him round the middle, and we'll up-set him."

Notwithstanding the number of his antagonists, and that one leg was encumbered by the trap, it required a severe struggle to master him. And Ned, while endeavoring to secure one of his fore legs, received a blow in the breast that knocked the breath out of him, and rendered him helpless for a few moments.

"It is a she one, Charlie," said Joe; "now, if you can get the feller we saw swim the pond the other morning, you'll have your pair. Run home and get ropes, sled, and oxen, and we'll hold the crittur, till you get back."

When the moose was secured and put on the sled, Charlie told Joe how unceremoniously they had taken leave of Sally.

"I knew she would want us to stop till after dinner; knew we couldn't, and thought the best way was to run."

"So it was; but as soon as you get the moose home, you must come over to our house to supper; that's all the way to settle it with her."

The next day, about eight o'clock, Joe came over to Charlie's, with a herring net on his shoulder.

"I've been looking all round that pond," said he; "and while I lay so long in the woods, I was considering; and I guess as how I've found a way to take that ere bull moose."

"How?" said Charlie.

"You see they don't keep much with the rest, this time o' year; kind o' by themselves like. I've been watching him."

"How do you expect to take him?"

"In this ere net."

"Take a moose in a herring net," said Charlie, bursting into a laugh, in which all the rest joined, even to old Mr. Bell and Charlie's wife.

"You won't laugh," said Joe, "when I get him."

"Yes, I will," said Charlie; "I shall be so glad, I'll laugh more. But who ever heard of such a

thing as setting a herring net for a moose. I don't think there's any danger of the meshes being too large ;" and then he burst out again.

" I knew a little boy once," said Joe ; " he was quite a smart boy ; raly knew considerable, and was quite handy with tools ; but he didn't know quite as much as he thought he did ; he'd been kind o' praised and petted by older people — "

" O, stop, Joe."

" No, I shan't stop, 'cause I'm one of the go-ahead kind. I never stop when I once start. As I was saying, this little boy was praised so much, it blew him up just like one of those puff-balls you find in the grass in dog days. He dug a boat out of a great tree, big enough for four or five to sail in ; made her just like a keel boat, — real good model, — put masts and sails in her, and painted her as fine as a fiddle ; but he dug her out so thin there wasn't four inches of straight wood in her. Some older folks, that had a little sense and some experience, told him he ought to put some knees in her. But no ; he knew better than anybody else. So when he got her all done, he took in a barrel of sugar, a lot of corn, and another boy with him, their guns, powder, and all their fixings, and

went off in a fresh breeze, to show themselves and their new boat. They were sailing along so grand (who but they!), and everybody was looking. This little boy felt so big, he took off his hat and gin it a great swing, and opened his mouth to cheer, when the boat split right in two; and away went the boys, sugar, and guns, right into the sea, and the little boy got his mouth full of salt water. Folks thought, and the little boy thought, it would take the consate out of him; but it didn't quite."

During this narration, Charlie's face was as red as crimson.

With perfect simplicity, Ned, who had been listening with great attention, asked, "Who was it, Mr. Griffin? Did I ever see him?"

"It was I, Ned," said Charlie. "You're too bad, Joe. I never will laugh at anything you do or say again."

"'Tain't best for you to; they say folks that live in glass houses shouldn't ought to fire stones; and when a rat what has lost his tail in a trap is invited out to company with other rats, he always squats down in a corner, and don't parade himself in the middle of the room."

"But truly, Joe, what are you going to do with that net?"

"I'm going to set it for a moose, I tell you; and I'm going to ketch him, too."

"Where? in the woods?"

"No; in the water. As I tell you, I've been watching him. That moose has got a kind of a beat of his own; he likes the sweet feed round the sou'-west end of the pond; but he hears my dog bark, and one kind of a noise or another, or scents the buildings, and don't like to come only in the latter part of the night, when all is still; then he works along and feeds. But the moment the day breaks, he comes to the pond, and swims up through the narrows, and goes to feeding up to the other end, till the sun gets hot, and the flies bite sharp; then he goes off into the wilderness. I know, 'cause I've watched him. Now I'm going to set this net in the narrows of the pond, and spread it out with its grapplings, just like a horse-shoe, and bring the two ends down alongside of the shore, so he can't get betwixt it and the land; then I'm going to bend two long warps to the ends of it; one of 'em I'll take into the bushes on the nor'-west side; the other I'll put to a stake on

the opposite side, under water, way down, so that the moose will swim over it, when he goes into the net, then bring it across to where the other rope is, so that when he's in, I can pull stake and all right up; then I mean to have a puckering rope; there's a dead tree standing in the water; I'll put a block on that, under water, make the puckering rope fast to the net, reeve it through the block, bring the end into the bushes; and if I don't roll him up in that net, half drown him, and take him just as easy as a cat can lick her ear, I won't guess again."

What Joe called the narrows was a place in the pond about midway of its length, where a point made out from one shore, extending nearly to the opposite side, giving the sheet of water somewhat the shape of a pair of spectacles. Indeed, it was often called Spectacle Pond.

"How do you know he will swim up through the narrows?" said Charlie.

"I tell you, that's a notion he's got, and he'll stick to it till the feed gets short, or he sees or hears something that starts him; then he'll go twenty miles off, perhaps."

"But," said Walter, "when he sees the net

buoys, won't he take alarm? or if the wind happens to be blowing down the pond, won't he scent you and Mr. Bell where you lie to pull the ropes, and turn, swim back, or swim to one side and land?"

"I've no doubt he would; but I calc'late to have father Bell hid on the nor'-west side, and you and Walter on the sou'-east, with a boat. The minute he sees the net buoys, he'll turn; then you'll be behind him, and must show yourselves, and launch the boat. He'll be more afraid of you than he will of pieces of wood floating on the water, or anything he smells and don't see or hear; and he'll go into the net."

"But he will tear the net all to pieces," said Charlie.

"I don't care; it's about worn out."

"But won't he get clear? Will it hold him?"

"Well, a moose is a master powerful crittur on land, especially one of this kind, and resolute when they find they are penned; but in the water it's another matter. There'll be some splashing; but the net will tangle him, and he can't do anything; the more he kicks and thrashes, the better for us."

So eager had they all become in the affair as to

repair to their stations in the twilight. To their great delight, after twelve o'clock, there came a fresh south-west breeze, which rendered it impossible for the game to scent them, and greatly diminished the possibility of his hearing any accidental noise they might make.

Earlier than before, when there was barely light sufficient to discern an object across the pond, the moose came, with his loping trot, to the water, drank, browsed a few moments on some bushes at the edge, and walking into the water, stood, listened, and sniffed the air, and perceiving no cause for alarm, swam leisurely in the direction of the narrows. As Joe had predicted, when he caught sight of the net buoys he evidently thought all was not right, but swam more slowly, and turned his head from side to side, seemingly somewhat alarmed. But he had now reached a point where the banks were rocky, precipitous, and difficult of access, and he continued to swim on, but hesitatingly; at length a flaw of wind, striking down from the high bank, set the buoys bobbing up and down in the water. This decided the matter, and he turned to swim back. Old Mr. Bell and Ned rose from the bushes on the north-

west side and shouted; he instantly made for the opposite shore, when Walter launched a boat and pulled out into the pond behind him, John walking along the shore, Mr. Bell and Ned doing the same on the opposite side. Thus hemmed in, prevented from either landing or turning back, he turned and swam directly for the narrows, as the only way of escape. His pursuers followed very leisurely, not wishing to hurry or alarm him more than was necessary, lest he should break from them and land. But no sooner had he entered between the long line of buoys, where the shores came near to each other, and were precipitous, than the boat dashed forward; the men on each shore shouted, and flung stones in the water. The moose dashed wildly forward, evidently hoping to pass over the net in front, which was moored in the middle to the bottom by a heavy grappling; but the moment his breast touched the buoys, Joe pulled up the stake that held one side of the net to the opposite shore, and thus brought the two sides of the net together, closing it up behind him. Charlie at the same time, pulling on the other rope, pressed up the two lower edges of the net beneath. The moose could not lift his fore legs over the

buoy rope of the net in front, and though he rent in twain the net, it caught in his hoofs, and rolled itself around his legs, till they were as large as a peck measure: his hind parts were in the same condition, for he tore the net with his hind feet, and rolled and twisted it around him, till finally he tied himself up in a hundred turns, became completely helpless, and in his struggles to get free, pulled his head under water so many times that he was half drowned, and, entirely exhausted, submitted to his captors without a struggle.

"What did I tell you?" said Joe. "Now, when that crittur is rested, he's all right; he's only tired; but the one we caught in the trap has got a bad leg, that lames him; perhaps the flies will get into it, and breed maggots, and 'twill be a long time getting well."

"O," said Charlie, "it is a deal better. Joe, I never will laugh at anything you propose again, if it is to set a herring net for a bear."

"Well, I've no doubt they might be caught, for they often take to the water. Only see how easy we can get this fellow home; take his head up to the stern of the boat, and tow him, net and all, down the outlet of the pond, clear to the mill; take him up the sluice, right into it."

And so they did; but instead of taking him up the sluice, they backed a sled into the pond, floated him on it, and did not liberate him from the net till they had hauled him into the barn floor. Here they cut the net from him, saving only the buoy rope.

"Joe," said Charlie, "I'll give you a new net. I'll get the twine, and Mary will net and marl it."

"Much obleeged; and when there's a hundred head of moose and deer on Elm Island, and the great hunt comes off, I shall expect to be invited."

"Not the least doubt of that, Joe."

"John, is Lion Ben's scow in your cove now?"

"Yes, father and I have been telling every day about taking it home, but have neglected it."

"I'm glad of it. Now, I've got a plan. O, I feel so nice to think I've got two moose, three deer, and a bear! Let us all go and finish up Joe's hay, then take the scow, put the game aboard, take Joe and his wife, John and his wife, Fred Williams and his wife, my wife, and all the children, and go to Elm Island, and surprise father and mother. Father will jump out of his skin when he sees the game: he has always been as

full of it as I have ; they will be company for him there on the island."

" Perhaps," said Joe, " so many at once wouldn't be convenient."

" Don't you worry about that ; the house is big enough ; my wife and yours will take hold and help mother, and if father is doing anything special, we'll help him do that, and have a real *rinctum*."

You will perceive, my young friends, that Charlie had two fathers, a real one, and Lion Ben, who, with his wife, had adopted him when his own parent was supposed to be dead. So, in order to distinguish, he called his parents on Elm Island Lion Ben and Sally. But half the time, when his real father was not present, and always when he was on Elm Island, or even thinking of going, he went right back to the old primitive appellation, and it was father and mother all over. Thoughts of going to the island always stirred Charlie up. Captain Rhines used to say the wind was always fair for Charlie to go to Elm Island.

About three o'clock one afternoon, as Lion Ben and his son, who was now a stout boy, were toppling stalks, his father said, —

"Ben, run in and get me a drink of water, and bring out the whetstone; these knives are quite dull."

As Ben came out of the piece of corn, the tall stalks of which obstructed the sea view, he caught sight of the scow's mast and the peak of her mainsail, and in a moment she came fully into view, with Charlie standing on the end of the bowsprit, holding on to the jib-stay; he also saw the moose and deer.

Ben had heard talks enough between his father and Charlie about stocking the island with game, and understood the matter at a glance. For an instant he stood in doubt which to tell first, his father or mother; but he was nearest to the house. He shoved his head into the milk-room window and yelled, —

"Mother, mother, run to the shore; Charlie, Mary, Joe Griffin, and the moose are come!"

Sally dropped the skimmer into the pan of milk she was skimming, and ran to the door, wiping her hands on her apron as she went.

The next moment Ben had his father by the arm, but so out of wind with running, that all he could say was, —

"Father, the moose ! Charlie's got 'em."

The knife dropped from Lion Ben's hand, and flinging the breathless and excited boy on his shoulder, the giant proceeded with long strides to the shore, arriving there just as the scow touched the wharf, and about the same time as his wife, who had to take off her apron and right her hair a bit.

"O, mother ! father !" shouted Charlie, hugging first one, then the other, finally Ben, Jr., talking all the time ; "don't you think we've got two moose, and three deer, all mates, and a bear ! O, father, just what we've been so many years talking about ; and we never expected to get the moose, only deer ; just look at 'em, father ! But we shouldn't have got 'em if it hadn't been for Joe."

Charlie now stopped for lack of breath, while Ben and Sally shook hands with and welcomed the rest.

When Charlie commenced again, he said, "Father, we've brought our axes to build a fence right across the island, to keep them out of the fields."

"What are you going to do with the bear, Charlie ? I don't feel very anxious to have him."

"I've bought Wolf Island, and put some foxes on there, and I'm going to put the bear there as soon as Elwell gets his sheep off."

"Come, Charlie," said his mother, "let us go up to the house; you can't get the deer out till high water."

"Yes, mother; ain't this a dear old place? How nice you look, mother! And there's the eagle's nest, and the big maple; and there's the Perseverance — blessed old craft; and here are John, and Fred, and I, the old playmates on this old island, where we've had so many good times together. If I was alone I'd stand on my head."

"Do stand on your head if you want to, Charlie," said his wife.

"I know what we will do. After supper we'll have a wrestling match, and a swim. O, and such good time!"

CHAPTER VIII.

A LETTER FROM LEMAIRE.

WHILE the party were at Elm Island, they built a fence across it to restrain the deer and moose, cut all Ben's stalks, stacked them up, and had a grand good time. As they were returning home, Walter said to Ned, "Is it not about time we were doing something?"

"What shall we do?"

"I suppose Charlie would build us a vessel if we asked him. You and I could take a piece, my father would take a piece, and so would the Rhinenses; we could get owners."

"My father would take some," said Ned.

"But if she is set up this fall, she ought not to be planked up green; she ought to stand timbered out, to season till spring; and what shall we do with ourselves till then?"

"That is the thing. We might take the Perseverance, take Cameron with us, and a boy for

cook, and make a first-rate voyage to Martinique, if we hadn't brought off Peterson."

"I know it. There was Monsieur Renoult. I agreed to carry him, if I could get a large vessel, all the materials, timber, boards, nails, locks, and everything for a whole set of buildings; went over there, and sounded out the creek, to see how much water we could carry in; and I suppose he will soon be looking for me. But it would be as much as our lives are worth to go back there; Lemaire would find some way to make way with us before we had been there one week."

"We might go to Demarara, Antigua, or Berbice."

"Yes; but here is a voyage all planned, and that we know will be profitable; the others are uncertain. Well, we'll think of it."

When they landed at Pleasant Cove, they found Captain Rhines there, with old Mr. Bell, who had been left to keep house.

The captain handed Walter a letter; to his surprise, it was from Henri Lemaire.

"Read it aloud, Walter," said the captain.

Lemaire said in the letter, that when he found Peterson was missing, and the vessel gone without

a pilot, he knew they had taken him, and was so enraged, that if there had been the least hope of overtaking, he should have pursued; or had he come up with, should certainly have killed them, without regard to consequences. He felt it to be so mean, after all he had done for them, and the high price he had given, both for lumber and labor, to take the best servant he ever had,—a man capable of taking charge of his whole gang of calkers, and who was apparently happy and contented; but that now his feelings and opinions had very much changed in that respect. He then went on to say, that some time before he had hired an English sailor to work with Peterson, and after the loss of the negro, put him in foreman, as the next best thing, and found him to be a very intelligent, industrious man, though by no means equal to the black, and given somewhat to liquor.

“That is the very man,” said the captain, “that James told us about when we dined there. He liked him, and they got so intimate as to tell each other their histories, and lay a plan to escape.”

“Yes, sir, that’s the man; we saw him; he took charge of the gang while Peterson was shut up.”

He went on to say, that falling into conver-

sation one day with this man in respect to Peterson, the Englishman told him that Peterson had been a slave in New England, but in consequence of a change in the law, obtained his freedom; had at one time been a drunkard, but reformed, and learned to read and write; that he had a wife and a large family, a good house and land, and was highly esteemed by the whole community in which he lived; that he, Captain Griffin, had been greatly attached to the black from a child, who had petted him and made all his playthings for him, for he had often heard the black mention the name, and also of a good many others, and tell what good times many, who were now masters of vessels, used to have at his house, sitting on his knees and playing with his children, and he had not the least doubt but the Captain Griffin in that schooner was one of them, and had risked his life on account of this childhood liking; and that when he came to know all this, and reflect upon it, after his passion had cooled, he could not find it in his heart to blame him, feeling that he should have done the same under the same circumstances. He was also persuaded that he should have lost the negro sooner or later, as the Eng-

lishman assured him that all his cheerfulness was assumed, that he wept every night in secret, was all the time thinking about his wife and children, and laying plans for escape.

“I am persuaded it would not have been possible to have kept a man of his sense and resolution long on an island where there is such constant intercourse with the States.

“Monsieur Renoult, at Sans-souci, is very anxious to obtain the timber you agreed to bring him, but thinks you are deterred from fear of me. I have therefore written to assure you, that the past is all forgotten. He wishes you to write directly and inform him whether you will bring the lumber and other materials of which you took the dimensions, and when he may expect you. A Spanish merchant is at St. Pierre, who will take any surplus lumber you may have, after supplying Renoult, as lumber is high here.’”

“There, my boy,” said the captain, when Walter had concluded, “Joe tells me you and Ned were getting uneasy, and thought you were at home too long. There’s business for you at once; and if you want a vessel, we are ready to build you one amongst us; set her up this fall.”

"I am certainly much obliged to you, captain ; but what am I to carry this lumber in ? Renoult wants all the timber for a sugar-house, dwelling-house, store-houses for coffee and sugar, and negro quarters, all framed ready to go together ; boards, shingles, nails, locks, and hinges. All this stuff cannot be carried in a small vessel. Where is the large one to come from ?"

"The vessel has come, I expect. The Casco ought to have been in Boston a week ago, but all the vessels have been having long viges. Isaac told me, when he went away, that he wanted to stay at home next winter ; that he made such a blunder putting Aldrich in her, he didn't mean to try again, and wanted me to look up some good man to take her when he got home. I reckon she's big enough."

"O, Captain Rhines, I'm not capable of taking charge of such a ship as that. She will carry twenty-five men before the mast. I've not had experience."

"The dogs you haven't ! Then get it as you go along, as I did. You've been in the ship, know all about her ; the vige is all laid out ; go to St. Pierre, sell to the Spaniard he speaks of, all the

lumber over and above Renoult's contract, and take sugar, coffee, molasses, or whatever you can do best with, but sell to Renoult for cash. That, I understand, is the bargain betwixt you and him; then go to Trinidad and buy molasses; you can buy it there for a song; then bring home the money left, for at the rate he has agreed to give for the lumber and stuff, you'll have a good deal of money left."

"But I have only been mate of a vessel one voyage, and never had charge of one at all, except the *Perseverance*."

"Don't be too modest, and make difficulties. You ought to feel that I am capable of judging whether you are fit or not. I have watched you all along. I know what Fred Williams said about you when you was in the store with him; what Captain Murch said when you was before the mast, in this same ship, with him. I know Captain Brown's opinion when you was his mate in the *Arthur Brown*. I know what you did in the *Perseverance*. I know your father and grandfather, the whole breed you came from, clear back, and there never was a poor shack among them. You are going to take charge of the ship; so say no more about it."

"But will the rest of the owners be willing?"

"Ben and I, Charlie Bell and John, own the most of her. I have talked with them. Captain Murch leaves it with me; so does Mr. Welch. I act for them."

"Who shall I have for mate?"

"Ned Gates."

"That is what I should have preferred. Ned is young, but he is capable, and has been at sea as long as I have, and we cannot be separated."

"It's your business to select your officers, but I should like to propose a second mate."

"Name him."

"Dick Cameron."

"I should like him above anybody that I can think of, and when we get to sea, he'll be a better seaman than the captain and mate both, and be able to show us our duty."

"He's been ten viges with me. I've put him in jail when we got in, and taken him out again when we went to sea, in order to keep him sober. I've known him to come aboard ship, with no chest or bag, nothing but the clothes on his back, and a pair of boots strung around his neck; but I used to put up with it all, because he was such a

choice man the moment the rum was out of him. It is a good thing to have so powerful, resolute a man as he is, aboard ship. I've been teaching him navigation, and I don't mean to leave Dick Cameron till I see him master of a vessel. He's done one of the hardest things in this world — left off drinking; for I know by a little what a good deal means. I took my liquor for thirty years, but always in moderation."

"Had I better reply to this letter directly?"

"No; wait till we hear that the ship has got in. I shall go to Boston to let Captain Murch come home, stay there, discharge her, and bring her down. Most of the crew belong here. I'll take Cameron with me, get the hardware there, and put it right into her."

"Can I get a crew round here?"

"Yes; there's eight able seamen in her that I know would go again, that belong here. Henry Merrithew, George Elwell, and Sewall Lancaster, that were with you in the Arthur Brown, have gone a fishing, but will be home by the time the ship is ready."

"My brother Henry will go, I know."

"So will Sam Hadlock, Frank Henley, James and John Parker, Sam Hatch, and William Brackett."

"I know of two more — Jack Dinsmore, and Henry Plaisted; yes, and Danforth Eaton; there's nineteen."

"There will be no sort of trouble in getting a whole crew of our own neighbors, all young men and able seamen, and that can be depended on."

"Don't the mates belong here? and won't they expect to go again?"

"No. Isaac shipped them in New York. The mate drinks, and he don't like the second mate; he gets asleep in his watch, and don't get along well with the men."

"Will there be any difficulty in loading here?"

"Not the least. All the dimension stuff can be sawed in the mill; your father, Joe, and our Ben can frame it; there's boards enough at the mill; any quantity of shingles can be had, and the cargo be ready to go aboard by the time the vessel is here."

The next week Captain Rhines had news that the Casco had been spoken in the south channel.

It was now a scene of activity at Pleasant Cove. Captain Rhines, Cameron, and Ned started for Boston. Ned stopped at Salem, while the vessel was discharging, to see his family, as he did not

expect to be at home again before they sailed. Cameron went to work upon the rigging, sails, and in painting the vessel, with that portion of the crew that belonged at Pleasant Cove, and wished to go home in the ship. Walter was buying shingles and boards, and getting the lumber and frames to the wharf, also provisions for the ship. He was much gratified when Captain Murch told him he highly approved of Captain Rhines's choice of him to take charge of the ship.

It was now early autumn, the weather cool, and the ship nearly laden.

"Now, boys," said Charlie, "the acorns and beech-nuts will soon be ripe. I have got the fence for the graves on Wolf Island all made, ready to set the posts and put up, and the posts are all ready. Let Captain Rhines and the second mate see to the ship; we will get Joe Griffin, go on and put it up, and take on the bear."

"That will be nice," said Walter. "I was going to ask you if we couldn't do it before we went away."

"I'll tell you something, but you must keep it to yourselves. My wife thinks that Captain Murch is after Elizabeth Goodhue, Parson Goodhue's

daughter. You know the women always find out such things."

"That is about all they think about," said Walter, who, full of business and enamoured of sea life, paid very little attention to the gentler sex.

"At any rate, Walter," continued Charlie, "it is a very good thing, for it has been the means of giving you the ship."

"Why so, Mr. Bell?"

"Because Edward Lancaster is after her, and Mary says, that Edward being at home all the time, having so much better opportunity, and being a very likely fellow, Isaac is afraid he will get her while he is away; she says, too, that the parson and his wife rather favor Edward, because they would rather she would not marry a seafaring man, who is gone all the time, and perhaps would take her with him; yet they think highly of Captain Murch."

"There's not a likelier man in town," said Walter, "than Isaac Murch. I have sailed with him, and never knew him to be out of the vessel a single night, in port."

"I like Edward; but Isaac, John Rhines, Fred Williams, and I, built the Hardscrabble, and have

always struggled along together, till we've got the victory; and we, of course feel for Isaac. Now, I'm going to take the Perseverance, so as to have something to flee to if it rains, invite Elizabeth and her two sisters, Captain Murch, Joe, Fred, and John, with their wives, to go with us, catch some fish, make a chowder, camp out one night, and have a good time. While Joe and I put up the fence, you, Ned, and Captain Murch can take the women and go a fishing, and get engaged yourselves, for all I care."

"Ned can," said Walter; "he's just the boy for that; he's courting half the girls in Salem, and he hadn't been here a fortnight, before he knew more girls than I, who was born and brought up here."

"Hold your tongue, Wal; it isn't so. Mr. Bell, don't mind him; he thinks if you are decently polite, and attentive to ladies, you are in love with them."

"Captain Murch," said Charlie, "has been at sea ever since he was a boy, very little in society of any kind, and he will appear to much better advantage on board the Perseverance than anywhere else, and by the time you want to come ashore, will get his bashfulness and sea rust worn off."

"Yes, Mr. Bell," said Ned, "he can bait their hooks, show them how to throw a line over, take the fish off the hooks, and if they get a big one, pull it up for them; tell them about flying fish, dolphins, whales, and all that."

"Yes," said Walter, "and about the time the porpoise pulled him overboard, and he was almost drowned."

"O," said Ned, "and can't I tell something? I'll tell those two girls about the time I was on the raft almost starved to death, and how I was wounded. I'll make 'em cry; I'll be engaged to both those girls before I get back. If one of the dear creatures pricks her finger with a hook, I'll tear a piece off my handkerchief, and do it up, and be so concerned! But, Wal, he'll stand up like a timber head, never speak a word, and they'll vote him a great bore. 'Don't see,' they'll say, 'what Mr. Bell can see in him, to think so much of him; but Mr. Gates, O, he is so pleasant and attentive, so considerate, looks so pleasant when he smiles, is so handsome, such a fine complexion for a sailor, has been through so much, and so young, too!'"

CHAPTER IX.

FOR ST. PIERRE AND A MARKET.

THE Casco arrived safely at St. Pierre, after rather a long passage, by reason of light winds. It was to Walter and the whole ship's company a most pleasant voyage; everything fore and aft went on in perfect harmony. The officers were old shipmates and fast friends. The crew were all neighbors and acquaintances, knew their duty, and were willing to do it. There were thirty men before the mast, able and ordinary seamen. Ships in those days were under the necessity of carrying a much larger crew in proportion to their tonnage than at present, since all the inventions now in use to lighten labor were then unknown, and nearly everything was done by main strength. Many of these men had been in the ship before, and some of them, with the captain and Ned, in the Arthur Brown. Another circumstance that added greatly to the pleasure of the voyage was,

that John Rhines came out passenger. John had never been farther from home than Boston in his life, and his father (now relieved of all fears of his contracting a taste for the occupation of a sailor, of which he had always been apprehensive) had persuaded him to go, as it was a healthy period of the year, and the vessel large, with good accommodations.

John was a universal favorite among his townsmen for several reasons, both personal and relative. Every one, especially the seafaring community, loved old Captain Rhines and Lion Ben; in the next place, as a town, they had always raised the strongest men, and carried off the prize at all wrestling matches and trials of strength. John's father and grandfather, Uncle Isaac Murch and Walter's grandfather, had never been thrown by any man the neighboring towns had been able to produce. There were now three men who represented the place: Lion Ben, Edmund Griffin (Walter's father), and his brother Joe. As for Lion Ben, no one thought of challenging him, and if there had been no others of remarkable abilities of that kind, there would have been no wrestling matches; therefore the actual wrestlers were Edmund Griffin and Joe.

Edmund, however, was getting in years, and probably would not risk his hard-earned laurels by wrestling much more; therefore Joe Griffin might be considered the town's champion; but John Rhines had begun to attract attention, since, in the absence of all the noted wrestlers, he had saved the reputation of the place by throwing Lem Libby, of which feat the people were excessively proud. He was almost as large as Lion Ben, and the old people said he was built, for all the world, just like his grandfather, and would, if he lived, be the pride and honor of the place, and keep the ring against all comers.

While John was thus popular by virtue of the good qualities of his ancestors, he was also beloved on account of his own noble nature and high principle, by both old and young.

There had been a good deal of calm weather, and they had had a merry time of it; Captain Griffin had brought the ship into port in good order, and as Cameron had repaired all deficiencies before she sailed, there was not much to be done, and afternoons they had all manner of athletic sports in constant progress. A mutual attachment was thus formed between the different members

of the ship's company, and a mutual confidence in each other, that afterwards proved of great value. Scarcely were the anchors dropped, than Pierre Lallemont came alongside in his boat, pulled by his negro boy, according to the custom of coopers. Seeing the ship come in, he was looking for a job. Great was his surprise, when, upon gaining the deck, he met Walter and Ned.

"I knew the ship right well, captain," he exclaimed, in amazement, "the moment she hove in sight; but of all men in the world, you are the last man I should have expected to meet here."

"Why so, friend, Pierre?" said the captain, walking towards the companion-way, and beckoning the other to follow. "Why do you say that?" he repeated, when they were fairly below.

"Captain, you know what was done on the last trip. What do you suppose your life will be worth when Henri Lemaire comes to know you are in St. Pierre?"

"Worth as much here as anywhere else;" and he related to the black the contents of the letter he had received.

"Excuse me, captain, but are you so short-

sighted as to put any confidence in the contents of that letter?"

"Why not? What object could he have to write thus, except he meant it?"

"What object? To get you where he could kill you. I know Henri Lemaire better than you do. I know him through and through, and no man ever knew him to miss his blow. He was so enraged when he found Peterson was gone, that he shot old Phil on the dining-room floor, beat Baptiste, his confidential slave, with the butt of the pistol, and broke his arm. He knew all about your contract with Renoult, and that you would not dare to come back here for fear of him; and he has written that letter to draw you here, by the prospect of a profitable trade."

"I think you must be mistaken, Lallemon. No man could feign the sentiment of that letter; you are prejudiced against him; he is well spoken of here, and Peterson told me that he is a kind master; feeds and treats his slaves well."

"That is policy, not principle. He keeps his working cattle well, for Henri Lemaire loves money; but his slaves don't live long when they come to be past labor; then they somehow dis-

appear. Captain," continued the black, his countenance assuming an expression almost of agony, "I was greatly moved by what you did for Peter-son, at the time, and I have thought more of it since. I saw in you a feeling that I had no belief could exist in the heart of a white man for a black. You risked your own life to rescue one of my race from slavery, and for that reason I feel for you as I feel towards no other man living, white or black. Your life is in danger every moment you are here. I know it, and I am grieved, because I see that I am making no impression upon you. I shall not, however, cease to watch over your safety as much as lies in my power; and I want you to gratify me in one respect."

"What is that, friend Pierre?"

"To go armed; that will not be much trouble to you."

"Though I see no occasion for it, I will gratify you in that."

"Who is this noble-looking gentleman you have on board?"

"He is the son of one of the owners."

"Well, take him with you, when you are in company with Lemaire, and wherever you go."

"Cooper, your imagination, your prejudices, or something, runs away with you."

Captain Griffin found the Spanish merchant ready to purchase at a fair price, and was much pleased with him, both as a man of business and socially. Just as the lumber purchased by him was landed, Lemaire's droger came into the harbor, having on board her owner and Monsieur Renoult, who, having heard of the arrival of the vessel, had brought with him a negro pilot to take her into his place.

Lemaire received Captain Griffin and John in so cordial a manner, that the slight impression made by the words of Lallemont entirely faded from his mind. In order, however, to perform his promise to the cooper, he wore arms, but determined to accept the cordial invitation which Lemaire had given both him and John to visit him at Vauclin.

During the whole time the Casco was at Sans-souci, discharging, Lemaire was frequently back and forth; and just before the ship was ready to haul out of the creek, made up a party, composed of neighboring planters, and invited Captain Griffin and John to a sumptuous entertainment at his house.

Not seeing Uncle Phil at his usual post, he asked Jean where he was, who replied that he was dead. He also noticed that Jean himself seemed nervous and sullen, and appeared to have lost the joyous, careless humor peculiar to him. If, however, a momentary suspicion crossed his mind at this confirmation of the words of Lallemon, it was the next instant banished by the frank courtesy of his entertainer; and concluding that Lallemon, while a slave to Lemaire, had contracted a prejudice on account of some deserved punishment, he determined to endeavor to dismiss the matter altogether from his mind. He did not quite succeed, however; he recollected, at the first interview he had with the cooper, how reluctant he was to inform him of the whereabouts of Peterson, and how fearful he seemed to be of exciting the vengeance of Lemaire against himself. Neither could he banish from his mind the expression of sincere and deep emotion in the face and tones of Pierre, as he besought him to heed his warnings.

"He believes it himself, at any rate," thought Walter; "but do the best I may, I cannot."

The ship now returned to St. Pierre, in order to take in a part of a cargo, before going to Trinidad to fill up.

Lumber was high, sugar and molasses low ; and Walter had made so good a bargain with the lumber he sold to Renoult, that he took a large quantity of specie on board, the greater part of which he would take home, as the lumber he sold at St. Pierre would give, in the way of exchange, two thirds of a cargo. They had been three days taking in cargo, when, at the close of a day's work, Lallemond, who coopered the Casco, asked to see the captain alone.

CHAPTER X.

THE VELVET PAW.

“WELL, friend Pierre,” said Walter, “I have been at Sans-souci, and returned safe and sound. I have been with Lemaire at Vaucelin both night and day, rode with him from Sans-souci to Vaucelin, received every attention from him, and given him every opportunity to injure me if he wished, and here I am. I wore arms, because I promised you I would; but I felt, all the time, heartily ashamed of it, as, by my act and suspicions, I felt I was wronging a kind and noble-hearted man.”

“You are here, indeed, safe and sound, captain, and right glad am I to see it; but you are not through yet. I wish you was. Yes, I wish to Heaven you were at anchor in Boston harbor, since all that you now say makes as little change in my opinion, as all that I have heretofore said has made in yours.”

"Why, what more would you have, you unreasonable man? You entreated me to wear arms, and not put myself in the way of Lemaire alone, for he would kill me. I have put myself in his way, and have had no trouble, or occasion to use the arms."

"He is deeper than the ocean itself; the opportunities were not to his mind; your disappearance would have directed suspicion to him; he only waits his time. I think I can convince you of the truth of my suspicions, provided you will engage, upon your honor, never to repeat what I shall say to you."

Walter having given him the required assurance, he approached close to him, and laying his hand upon his shoulder, said in a whisper, —

"Captain, Henri Lemaire is an *old pirate*."

Walter started as though an adder had stung him.

"Be careful what you say, Lallemon; that is a terrible accusation, and not to be grounded upon mere suspicion."

"It is *not* suspicion, captain."

"How came you by any such knowledge?"

"I was born on Lemaire's plantation — the

second year that he came to reside on it. My father was a Frenchman; his mate while he was captain of a pirate, and his overseer after he came here. I tell you that man has waded knee deep in blood. Polite and mild-mannered as he seems, he's a tiger at heart, and would cut your throat with a feather. Captain Griffin, that man never yet missed his blow."

"How came you a slave, if your father was a white man?"

"My mother was black, a slave to Lemaire; and the children are bound by the condition of the mother."

"Did your father tell you this?"

"Not by any means; he treated me and my mother just as the other slaves, and lashed us just as freely."

"How then came you by this knowledge?"

"Fothier, the father of Jean, whom you have seen at Vauclin, and whom Lemaire puts more confidence in than any other servant he has, who always had charge of Peterson when he was shut up, whom Lemaire most cruelly abused when he found the calker was gone, was mate with Lemaire before my father was. Lemaire bought the planta-

tion at the north part of the island before he left pirating, stocked it with slaves and cattle, took my father for mate, and put Fothier on it as overseer. When he bought Vauclin he made my father overseer there, and I was sent to a priest, taught by him to read and write, and then learned the cooper's trade, and was employed a good deal in the office to keep accounts; at such times a good many things dropped from my father, when he was in liquor, that excited my suspicions, and more as I grew older. Fothier used to come twice or three times a year; then they would lock themselves in a room, and gamble and drink wine. The words that I heard drop from my father from time to time, had so excited my curiosity, that I used to listen at the door. I could only hear snatches of conversation when they would raise their voices for a moment; but all I did hear went to confirm my previous suspicions: it was all about robbing vessels, killing people, and sharing money. Fothier told about their taking a vessel that had on board a Spanish family returning to Spain from Havana; how the women had rich jewels in their ears, and the men heavy gold rings on their fingers; every one of the ship's company was

murdered, and the pirates were grabbing, each for himself; that he cut off the fingers and ears of this family, and put them in his pocket, then got the rings and jewels from them, hid them, and didn't turn them into the common heap, as was the custom. Then my father told about their landing on some part of Cuba, where was an old planter, who was rich, and lived in a lonely place; he spoke so low I could only make out that they tortured him, to make him tell where his money was; but whether they got it or not, I couldn't tell. They had a great deal to say of what the captain said and did, and how he got almost the whole; that he was rich and rolling in money, and they were poor, and had to work for a living, and were often found fault with besides. This captain, they had so much to say about, I believe was Lemaire, though that was not the name they gave him."

"What name did they give him?"

"Ruis. And then my father brought his hand down on the table, and said, 'Fothier, we can hang Ruis whenever we like.' 'Yes, by hanging ourselves,' was the reply."

"I don't see any reason for concluding Ruis and Lemaire to be the same person, although there is

no doubt that these fellows had been mates or men under some cutthroat by the name of Ruis."

"I am not alone in that opinion, captain. Father died. I bought my freedom, and Jean came here in my room. Fothier never treated him as my father did me, but was kind to him, and helped him about his business. He who had greater opportunities for knowing than I had, came to the same conclusion, from what he used to hear when my father returned Fothier's visits. I continued to work for Lemaire from time to time, have always done his coopering; and after Jean and I came together, we began to compare what each had heard. I was cleaning up the office one day, and found some old bills for cordage and stores for a vessel, approved by Christopher Ruis, and the acceptance was, I can swear, in Lemaire's handwriting, and it was his signature. Jean also says that they frequently spoke of the captain as old Chris, and that there are a pair of pistols and a sword belt in Lemaire's bedroom marked Christopher Ruis. Are you convinced now, captain?"

"By no means; those accounts might have come lawfully into his hands, and you might be

mistaken as to the handwriting. The sword-belt and the pistols prove nothing. A person may come honestly by the property of never so great a villain."

"If I cannot convince you that he was ever a pirate, perhaps it is of little use to say, that in my opinion he is still in constant intercourse with them, owns in the vessels, and shares in the profits, conceals and sells the booty, though considered an honest gentleman planter."

"What reasons have you for that belief?"

"Because some of the same kind of men, and some of the same men that used to be here in my father's day, are back and forth at Vauclin now; persons, too, that were intimate both with him and Lemaire. These men come here in two vessels, lie here, and fit out for the coast. They are called Guineamen; but they bring no negroes; they do not take in provision and water enough for Guineamen; on the other hand, instead of slaves, they often bring money."

"Perhaps they have landed their negroes at some other island, and bring the proceeds."

"I don't believe they bring sugar, and coffee, or spices from Guinea, or barter their cargo of negroes for it."

"If you are so sure of these things, and that Lemaire is a pirate in disguise, why have you not, long before this, informed the proper authorities, and had him arrested?"

"That would only be to seal my own fate. I have no direct evidence, no witnesses, to prove what I have heard. Fothier is dead; so are my father and mother. A negro would stand no chance of a fair hearing against a white, especially a wealthy one. Don't you know, captain, a person may be as sure of a thing as that he is alive, and still not be able to prove it to others, or in law."

"The fact is, Pierre Lallemon, you began to think about these matters when a mere boy, while you were a slave, and had but little to occupy your mind and take up your attention; and during all these years you have been poring over whatever you've heard yourself, or from Jean, and imagined one thing after another, till you have thus woven a story that seems to you real, and to account for all the facts, which perhaps are real as to the facts, but which have nothing at all to do with Lemaire, who is a high-toned gentleman, and a most frank, courteous, and hospitable person."

"Well, captain, just account for these things. A vessel takes sugar and coffee from Vauclin, and that same sugar and coffee come back to Vauclin in the Guineaman that we have been speaking of, and one of which you passed as you entered the harbor on your first arrival. The very casks I coopered, the very coffee I put into bags, and sewed up, and put a private mark on; and the vessel that took them — the Falmouth, of Portland, that has been here a score of times, and I have coopered her cargoes — was never heard of after sailing from here that time; but the second mate of her was picked up with the marks of knives on him."

"Vessels are often abandoned, and their cargoes, or portions of them, taken out by whosoever falls in with them; the man might have been torn by fish, and the injuries taken for wounds."

"Why do Guineamen come to Vauclin laden with silks, linens, muslins, teas, and all kinds of goods from different parts of the world, the cargoes always landed in the night; and why is that hill behind the house honeycombed with vaults in which they are stored?"

"How do you know that?"

"I know it because I've seen it with my own eyes, when I lived at Vaucelin, and it is the same now, as I hear from Jean. We often compare notes now. Lemaire well nigh killed him on account of Peterson's escape; it stirred up all the devil in him, and he is only waiting for a good chance to cut his master's throat; and ever since that time he has told me things that he never told or would talk about before."

Walter was somewhat staggered by this; he knew that Lemaire reposed great confidence in Jean, and he had noticed the morose and sullen appearance of the before light-hearted black. Lalle-mont saw the impression he had made, and felt encouraged. But Walter soon shook it off, and said, "If Lemaire owns Guineamen, he might purchase goods, and employ them as freighters when negroes could not be got, or the price was low, and land them in the night to avoid paying duties; smuggling in these parts is not considered very disreputable."

"Do you recollect of passing a brigantine the first time you came in here, that lay at single anchor, with her jibs loosed and her topsails hanging in the clew-lines?"

"Black hull and white spars, deep in the water, and full of men?"

"The same."

"She carried a deal of canvas too?"

"Yes; and what did you take her to be?"

"A Guineaman."

"Perhaps she is; but I have known that vessel for eight years; she never yet brought a negro to this island, or entered a cargo, but she has brought many a keg of gold and silver, cases of silks, bales of goods, and boxes of jewels to Vauclin. Why do you suppose she carries such a crowd of men? and what think you she needs of a runner and fall, with three shaved blocks large enough to put a mast in a frigate, that always lies on her main hatch?"

"I suppose she pretends to be a slaver, but is a smuggler; she wants the purchase, perhaps, to weigh some heavy merchandise; at times carries a large crew, in order that she may land her cargoes the quicker, and avoid discovery, and as the articles are valuable, it pays."

"The purchase was to weigh a heavy gun that is mounted amidships when in use; when you passed by, it lay under her main hatch."

"How do you know that?"

"I was on board of her, to see if they wanted any water casks coopered, and saw it."

"England and France are now at war, and she is probably armed to defend herself against the English cutters or privateers."

"Captain, I have heard the old negroes tell of serpents in Africa, that by looking at birds and other creatures, could charm them so that they would walk right into their mouths, making all the time the most mournful noise, and quivering with fear; and it seems to me that you have been charmed by Lemaire, are walking right into the trap he has set for you; that charm I cannot break;" and the black burst into tears.

"Pierre, my friend," said Walter, greatly touched by this proof of affection and interest, "if I could only see any reason for suspicion, I would. What trap can he set for me, even if he wishes to, of which I confess I see no evidence."

"I tell you, as I told you before, Lemaire never yet missed his blow. What he could not do, or did not wish to do, on the land, he will certainly find means to do on the sea. You will be followed by those who, when he gives orders, ask no

questions, and believe that dead tongues tell no tales. The day that Lemaire met you here, I was at work on the shore where I could watch his movements; after leaving you, he went on board that vessel, and spent the greater part of the day there, sitting under the awning with her captain, smoking. You and Mr. Rhines were sitting on the hen-coop of your ship, and I saw Lemaire point you out to the captain; and they were often pointing and looking towards the ship. I wish you could have seen how Lemaire looked when he pointed you out to the others (when he has that look on, I know very well what it means); then I should not have so long begged in vain for you to take care of yourself."

"But according to your showing, I am to be followed, I suppose you think, by the Guineaman."

"Yes, captain."

"The Casco must go, and I in her. How am I to help myself?"

"There are vessels going from here to the States all the time. I am cooeping a cargo for Captain Montfort, bound to Portland. Go aboard of him secretly, and leave Gates to take the vessel home. When Lemaire finds he has missed

his blow, he'll give it up, and not trouble the ship."

"I certainly never will do that, especially as I see no reason for it."

"Nor go to Trinidad, and join the ship there?"

"No."

Lallemont remained a long time silent: at length he said, —

"I have always heard, from a great many people with whom I have been acquainted in my business of working among vessels; that Americans are great hunters and marksmen; that in their new country there is game at their very doors. Is that true? and are your men, any of them, of that kind?"

"My friend," replied Walter, "in the part of America in which I live, the land is most all forest; the timber of which this ship was built was most of it cut within a gunshot of the blocks on which her keel was laid; those forests are filled with game, and on the shores are sea-fowl in great numbers. There is not a man in my ship but has been trained to shoot, from the time he was able to carry a gun or rifle, to kill sea-fowl on the wing, or deer on the leap. There are three of them,

Merrithew, Eaton, and Lancaster, who use nothing but the rifle, and whose bullets are sure death, and Mr. Rhines is not inferior to them."

"Will you, then, do this? You have in your ship's company thirty-five persons. Will you arm them all? Then, if you should be attacked, you might, perhaps, escape."

"If I should go and arm all my men upon the ground of what I consider a mere notion of yours, and nothing came of it, I should be laughed at as a coward. Besides, this is my first voyage as master of a vessel of any size, and I wish to do the best I can for my owners, and they might not relish paying the bill."

"Captain, I am a black, to be sure; but I am rich. I will pay the bill to give two guns, powder, and balls to every man in the ship."

"My friend, I certainly should not permit you to do that; but I will think of it. I must have time to think of it; you know I can consult with no one, as you have bound me to secrecy."

With this reply Lallemon was compelled to be satisfied.

It did, indeed, seem as though there was some ground for the black's illustration of the snake's

power over its prey, for Lemaire certainly fascinated Walter in a most remarkable degree. He was possessed of great powers of conversation, full of anecdote and pleasing reminiscences of the people he had known, and the manners and customs of the places he had visited, and was apparently the most frank and guileless of mortals. Walter had never met with any such person; it was an entirely new experience; and though it could not be said that the conversation of Lallmont was without impression, the next interview with Lemaire effectually removed that impression.

CHAPTER XI.

MURDERERS IN COUNCIL.

IT is always sad to see responsibility flinging its first shadow over the mind, the cares of life putting their impress on youthful brows, and anxiety dimming the glance of boyhood. The happiness of a boy may be, perhaps is, something akin to that of a lamb; but every well-constituted person loves to see lambs play, and would fain keep them thus a little longer.

Such was the effect produced upon the mind of the young captain by the grave circumstances in which he was now placed. As the time of sailing approached, the words of Lallemont, no longer counteracted by the influence and presence of Lemaire, produced more impression, and Walter's cheerful countenance began to assume a care-worn appearance, that did not escape the keen eye and quick sympathy of Ned.

This feeling grew more oppressive, because,

while he would gladly have laid the whole matter before Ned and Cameron, and consulted with them, he could not, without betraying the confidence reposed in him by the black. While thus moodily turning the matter over in his mind, he was brought to a decision quite unexpectedly. Chancing to call upon Senor Montaban, the Spanish merchant to whom he had sold his lumber, in order to pay his respects, and thank him for many attentions he had shown him, the merchant invited him to dine with him.

"Captain," said Montaban, "has your vessel any guns?"

"No, sir."

"Muskets, of course?"

"No, senor; not a fire-arm in the ship, except a rifle that belongs to a friend of mine, a passenger."

"So large a vessel as yours ought to have cannon. I suppose you are aware that, for the last three or four years, pirates have become quite bold in the West Indies."

"I have not known much about it, as I have been in another trade, running to France and Cadiz."

"They have taken some American vessels.

Your commerce has increased amazingly since you became independent states, and as you have not a navy like England to protect your merchantmen, these disasters will increase, I fear; and I have no doubt but they have abettors on shore, who, when matters come to attract notice, contrive, by dint of bribery, to slip their own necks out of the halter, leaving their subordinates to hang. Why don't you buy fire-arms, and arm your crew? Several vessels have beaten them off. These fellows, after all, when they find there are hard knocks to be got, are quite inclined to keep their distance."

"I do not like to do it on my own responsibility."

"I have no doubt they would be a good investment, if you have no occasion to use them."

"I never thought of that; I have no doubt but good rifles would prove a profitable investment, as you say. Our people hunt and trap a great deal; I have a mind to try them, as a venture, on my own account. I know there would be a good profit on powder and balls."

"I can purchase them for you at a better rate than you could, and shall charge no commission."

In pursuance of this idea, Walter purchased a

much larger quantity, both of arms and ammunition, than was needed to supply the ship's company.

In order to avoid the questions of Ned and Cameron, he contrived to have them brought on board in their absence, stowed away, and covered with spare sails.

Lallemont seemed highly gratified when Walter told him what he had done, but, notwithstanding, took leave of him with tears in his eyes, as though he never expected to see him again.

"One thing is certain, captain," said the black; "if anything happens to you, Henri Lemaire will not live long to rejoice over it."

"Don't talk or act in that manner, my friend. In liberating Peterson, I did, as I thought, my duty, and if I am to suffer for it, God's will be done. I have no fear of Lemaire, although there may be danger from others. As I understand, pirates are increasing around Cuba and the Keys; but in that respect we are in no more danger than other vessels."

Notwithstanding the firm conviction expressed by Lallemont, in respect to the designs of Lemaire, they arrived at Trinidad safely, and completed the cargo, but took no deck load, as the owners

preferred the money to put into a new vessel, rather than sugar or coffee ; thus there was left a large amount of specie to take home.

After the conversation with Montaban in respect to pirates, Walter had conversed with other ship masters, who had been long in the West India trade, and found it to be a universal opinion among them that the pirates had emissaries ashore, who knew what vessels sold their cargoes for cash, and informed their comrades ; many of them went so far as to aver that there were merchants confederate with them, who bought cargoes of lumber in exchange for West India produce, and employed pirates, who followed the vessels to sea, murdered the crew, took the vessels into some creek, when the cargoes were taken in drogers, carried to the merchants' plantations and warehouse, to be sold again.

While listening to these relations, Walter could not but perceive how perfectly they coincided with what the black had told him in respect to goods that had been shipped from Vauclin ; and also that the specie he had on board would render his vessel a valuable prize. But after leaving Martinique, and the company of his informers, and

especially after arriving at Trinidad without even seeing anything which could excite the least suspicion, he dismissed his anxieties, and regained all his usual cheerfulness.

While the ship lay at Trinidad, John Rhines brought on board a most singular venture, although quite characteristic, seeing he was a blacksmith — several tons of old, rusty iron. There was in this motley mass almost every article ever used on board vessels, or in connection with them, that could be named. There were large weights, shanks and flukes of anchors, grapplings, stocks of kedge anchors, rudder braces, boom irons, bolts of all kinds, crowbars, whole and broken, blacksmiths' tools, calking irons, marline spikes, harpoons, lances, whaling spades, hatch bars, ring bolts, axes, sledges, anvils, parts of chains, and almost every conceivable thing used in the building or fitting of vessels.

Great was the merriment excited when this strange merchandise came on board; loud the laughter, both forward and aft.

"What in the world are you going to do with that old iron, Mr. Rhines?" said Walter.

"I expect he's going to set up an old junk store," said Sewall Lancaster.

"You may laugh," replied John, "but I can assure you I shall realize more money from that heap of old iron, than any man or officer will from their ventures of sugar, coffee, or molasses, or than all of them together."

"How can that be?" asked the captain; "and what put it into your head to buy old iron for a venture?"

"I'll tell you," replied John. "When Charlie Bell, Fred Williams, Isaac Murch, and myself were poor boys, and undertook to build the Hardscrabble, and couldn't raise only money enough to half fasten her, I found on the wharf in Portland a heap of old iron that had been brought in some vessel from the West Indies, and bought what I wanted of it. You have no idea of the value of that old iron to us to finish the vessel. It will be just so with this. I bought it for little or nothing. I could throw half of it overboard, and then make money. When we get home, there will be a vessel on the stocks to plank up and fasten, and the greater part of that heap of old iron will be worth five times what I gave for it, to go into that vessel; there's a ton of spikes and bolts that only need to be heated and straightened, others to be

drawn or shortened, and there's not a scrap of iron or steel but can be either sold or worked up to a profit. I'll wager I could make more money to take a schooner of the size of the James Atherton, go around to these islands, buy old vessel iron, carry it home and work it over, than the majority of captains do in sailing their ships."

The iron was piled up in a square heap abaft the foremast, and the Casco, ready for sea, lay waiting for a fair wind, as Walter had determined not to make sail till he had the prospect of a strong, fair wind to carry him clear of the West India waters.

In the mean time Lallemont, a prey to uneasy thoughts and apprehensions, was sent for by Lemaire to set up some molasses hogsheads. The planter was frequently round where the black was at work, who often felt disposed to strike him down with his adze, flee to the mountain, and join the runaway negroes; but thoughts of his family withheld him.

Three days had thus passed away, when the Guineaman, to which reference has been made, and named the Languedoc, entered the creek. The adze dropped from the negro's hand as the

vessel, but too well known, rounded the point. At the first opportunity he sought Jean, and told him if he would find the destination of that vessel when she left Vauclin, he would reward him.

"I know of no other way," said Jean, "except to conceal myself in master's bed-chamber, where he and the captain always meet to consult; but if discovered, it is sure death."

"Liberty is as valuable as life; if you will run the risk, I'll give you money to buy your freedom, whether you discover anything or not. What I want to know is, whether this vessel is going to be sent in pursuit of the Casco."

"I'll do it."

"Do you have opportunity to go to his bed room?"

"In the daytime I do."

"What if he wants a table spread in the room, or liquors, and calls for you after you are concealed?"

"I'll get liberty and a pass to go to Sans-souci to see my wife, who belongs to Monsieur Renoult, and to stay all night. In a little room that opens into his bed-chamber, four hundred boxes of cigars and some old account books are piled up. In the

course of the day I can make a place in the middle of the pile."

"Can you hear there?"

"To be sure. I shall not be ten feet from him."

Jean, who, like most slaves, had practised from boyhood the trade of listening, accomplished his purpose, and the next day informed Lallemont that his master, after looking over business matters, told the captain of the brigantine that it was about time for him to lay off Trinidad and watch for the Casco, as she was nearly loaded, and had a good deal of money on board; that the captain of that vessel had injured him, and he was determined on revenge; that on condition he killed that captain, and brought him proof of it, he would give up his share of the booty to him, and a thousand dollars besides; that, upon this, the pirate captain (whose name is Skillings) spoke right up and said, 'Lemaire, you need not fear that I shall not do my best; the reward is not all, large as it is, for I also have an enemy in that ship I am bound to kill;' that Lemaire asked him about it, upon which he said, 'The day you pointed the captain of that vessel out to me at St. Pierre, didn't you see another man sitting

beside him?' 'Yes; that is Mr. Rhines, a passenger.' 'I know all about him. I lived once in the same place with him, and he did something to me that I'm bound to have his heart's blood for. He's forgotten me, but I'll let him know that I hain't forgotten him.'

"Then the captain of the pirate is an American?"

"It seems so; there is another American in her; the rest are most all Spaniards and Portuguese; there are not more than six or seven Frenchmen."

"I knew it, and I said it," replied Lallemont. Whenever any of these rovers came to Vauclin, which was seldom, it was made the occasion of a general debauch, the captain and his mates being invited to drink, feast, and gamble with Lemaire and the overseer, while the crew drank, grumbled, and quarrelled on board and in the negro quarters.

Lallemont was well versed in all their habits, from his long residence on the plantation, and took his measures accordingly. At the dinner hour he contrived, unobserved, to conceal a boat among some mangrove bushes in the creek. The brigantine lay at anchor some distance from the cove, on the banks of which the plantation was situated;

on her port bow lay an island, between which and the main land was a narrow channel, full of ragged rocks; through this pass a current set with great force, insomuch that vessels bound into Lemaire's were sometimes, when the winds failed them, drawn in there and bilged on the sharp rocks, as their anchors would not hold, the bottom being hard. A little after midnight, Lallemon, perfectly naked, might have been seen sculling the boat he had concealed among the mangroves, directly for the brigantine; when a little more than half way, he dropped a grappling gently to the bottom, and letting himself over the stern into the water, swam to the bow of the craft, and by the aid of one of the cables, clambered on board. He probably found the small portion of the crew in the condition he desired (as they had been drinking, dancing with the negroes, and fighting among themselves for two days), for he soon swam back, and bringing the stern of his boat under the cables, pressed the hemp hard against the edge of the oak plank, and with his cooper axe cut them off, one after the other, evidently with the hope and expectation that the vessel would drift into the rocky channel and bilge.

After completing his work, he stood up in his boat, and listened long and intently. Hearing nothing to create alarm, he came alongside the vessel, and making his boat fast to the fore chains, by the head and stern, listened again. Still hearing nothing to disturb him, he took from the boat a small vessel, with a conical one turned over it, and set them carefully in the chains, touching the lanyard of one of the fore shrouds. He then removed the upper vessel, which exposed to view a fire of coals in an iron kettle, which he had covered with one of the conical pots used to refine sugar, which, tunnel-shaped, with a hole in the small end, both served to conceal the fire and give it ventilation. Into this kettle he dipped a large bunch of oakum saturated with some inflammable material, which instantly blazed up, and catching the lanyard, ran up the rigging; when the black, setting his boat adrift, swam swiftly for the shore. It now seemed as though the noble negro would certainly accomplish his design, which was to render the brigantine useless, and thus give Walter Griffin time to escape, and, perhaps, bring some of the bloodthirsty wretches to a merited fate, subjecting them to the same tortures they often inflicted upon

the crews of merchantmen — burning them up in their vessels.

But before the fire had gained much headway, a launch, returning from St. Pierre, with a large crew manning the sweeps, came round the point of the island, roused the sleeping crew, who were sobered by the fright, put out the fire, and manning the boats, towed the vessel into the harbor. The attempt to wreck and burn the vessel was attributed, by Lemaire, to some one of the crew who thought he had been ill used in the division of plunder.

"The saints are all against me," said Lallemon, in despair, as from beneath the thick shade of the mangroves he beheld the crew of the vessel, and the launch, which was also the property of Lemaire, putting out the flames, and towing the brigantine into the creek, where, nevertheless, he resolved to burn her. He, however, found this to be impossible, so strict a watch was kept. But as the grappling for the anchors, and the repair of the rigging, occasioned a delay of some days, he was not without a faint hope that Walter might escape the snare so artfully spread for him.

"Well," he soliloquized, while putting on his

clothes, " they will not master that crew of resolute and armed men without some of them getting their deserts. I vowed a silver candlestick to the Virgin, but I'll give her a gold one if the young captain escapes Lemaire."

CHAPTER XII.

A SUSPICIOUS SAIL.

THE Casco left Trinidad at sunrise, with a fair wind, and plenty of it, and through the day saw many vessels lumber-laden, and bound to the different West India ports, but nothing that could excite suspicion ; yet, that night, the captain turned in a prey to uneasy thoughts, for well he knew that the next two days would either justify the assertions of Lallemont or prove them groundless. The human mind possesses a wonderful facility of inflicting self-torture, and, as it were, putting itself to the rack.

As Walter lay in his berth striving in vain to sleep, listening to the rush of water beneath the counter of the ship, and counting the moments, in the vain hope that the monotony of the act might induce sleep, the events of the last few weeks assumed an entirely different character ; just in proportion as absence weakened the force of the

fascination caused by contact with Lemaire, did the opinions put forth by the black gather strength and probability; facts and statements that before seemed detached and devoid of all connection now appeared closely related, and pointing to a common result. He remembered expressions he had heard drop from the planter manifesting a vindictive temper, but which made no impression upon him at the time; recollected coming suddenly upon him one morning when he was engaged in an angry colloquy with the overseer, when, despite his efforts to control himself, his features wore a most diabolical expression, in strong contrast with his usual winning gentleness of deportment. In that still, midnight hour, on the lonely sea, in connection with these things, came rushing upon his mind the declaration, little heeded at the time, of Lallemont, that if he had seen the look on Lemaire's face, the day he pointed him and Mr. Rhines out to the captain of the Guineaman, his words would have made more impression.

Unable to sleep, or endure the torture longer, he turned out before the morning watch was called, and went on deck.

The wind was so fresh that the topsails had

been single-reefed, top-gallant sails set over them, and the ship just laying her course. As the day broke he eagerly swept the horizon with his glass; but no sail was visible.

Having passed a sleepless night, and feeling much relieved, he charged the mate to call him the moment a sail was visible, went below, and slept soundly for four hours; after which he came on deck much refreshed, and the day passed without sighting any vessel except one lumber droger, bound to Trinidad, that they spoke.

Walter now felt that the peril was nearly passed, and began to congratulate himself that he had escaped all danger, when, as he lay in his berth the next morning, half an hour after sunrise, Ned woke him, with the news that a sail was in sight.

"What is she, Mr. Gates?"

"Can't make her out, well, sir; she appears to be a small vessel, schooner or brigantine."

"Where away?"

"Dead to leeward."

"Thank God for that."

"Why so, sir? What concern is it to us what or where she is?"

"Never mind. How far off, think you?"

"Perhaps eight or ten miles."

Ned, perceiving the anxiety of the captain, which sorely puzzled him, had, as the day broke, sent Merrithew to the mast-head as a lookout.

"What do you make of her, Merrithew?" shouted the captain, as he reached the deck.

"Think she's a topsail schooner, sir; but there's some vapor; can't see very well."

"Mr. Gates, call up the second mate; he has excellent sight, and his judgment is better than ours."

"I don't see," said Ned to himself, as he obeyed the order, "what he wants to call a man out of his berth for, to see every vessel that comes along."

"Mr. Cameron," said the captain, "I wish you would take the glass, go aloft, and see if you can make out that vessel to leeward. We are certainly passing her. Don't you think so, Mr. Gates?"

The mate assented to the opinion of the captain, but in a tone and manner that implied that it was the most indifferent thing in the world to him whether they passed her or not.

When the second mate came down, he said,—

"I call her a brigantine; but let her be what she will, she's lying to."

"Lying to!" exclaimed the captain. "Are you sure of that?"

"Yes, sir."

"Mr. Gates, shake out the reefs, and set the royal."

Ned and Cameron looked at each other in wonder, as they proceeded to obey the order.

"You are in the wind," said the captain to the helmsman, as he noticed the royals shake.

"She is barely laying her course, sir."

"Keep her off a point."

The Casco was no mean sailer, and being built for a mast ship, had great breadth of beam, and consequent capacity for carrying sail; under the tremendous pressure, the lee rail was under water, the lee rigging hung in bights, while every weather-shroud and back-stay was strained to its utmost tension, and the spars surged and bent as though they would go over the side at every lurch of the ship; and the deck was flooded with water.

While she was thus madly cleaving the waves, creaking and groaning in every timber, the captain was intently watching the sail to leeward.

"We are leaving her fast, Mr. Cameron," he said.

"It would be strange," said Cameron, "if, with all this canvas, we didn't leave a vessel lying to."

"We shall lose sight of her before long."

"If we don't take the spars out of her," replied the second mate. "I think the head of the foremast is sprung already."

The captain made no reply to this, but continued to watch the sail to leeward, as though there was nothing else in the wide world to be concerned about, while the mates and crew were looking at the spars, expecting every moment to see them go over the side.

At length Walter exclaimed, with an appearance of great anxiety,—

"We don't leave him any more."

"Perhaps he's made sail," said Ned.

The wind now began sensibly to abate, and the strange sail perceptibly to gain, till it was evident that she was a brigantine, carrying a great press of sail, and working to windward.

"She's a Guineaman, or some kind of a clipper," said Cameron; "she sails like the wind."

Walter now ordered the ship kept off, and the lee studding-sails set.

"It is none of our business," said Sewall Lan-

caster to the second mate; "but it seems rather queer, when a vessel is laying her course right along, to keep her off her course, and run the risk of losing the sticks out of her, for the sake of racing with a sharp shooter, that will sail two feet to her one; made for that, and nothing else."

The officer made no reply; but the seaman gathered, from the expression of his face, that they were not far apart in opinion. The vessel that had so excited Walter's suspicions, and caused him to put forth such desperate efforts to shake her off, was now plainly visible to the naked eye from the deck, and he grew sick at heart, as, through the glass, he beheld the too well known paint and rig of the very Guineaman that lay at anchor near him in St. Pierre.

Laying down the glass, he went below to conceal his emotion from Ned, who, he saw, was watching him closely. Bitterly did he accuse himself, as he paced the cabin floor, of the sheerest folly and stupidity in not crediting, nay, in almost treating with contempt, the well-meant warnings of the friendly negro. He felt that, by neglecting to arm his ship as he might have done, since, by

reason of her size and great breadth of beam, she was capable of carrying a gun of larger calibre than any pirate, and thus, with so large a crew, been in a condition to set all marauders at defiance, he had probably surrendered his officers and crew to butchery, and the property of his owners to plunder.

With what terrible import, in that hour of anguish, came home to his mind those ominous words of the negro, that the pirates acted upon the principle that dead tongues tell no tales, and butchered the crews they overpowered. It was a fearful ordeal for a young man with but little experience, a ship of seven hundred tons, with treasure and a valuable cargo, and more than thirty lives depending upon his act—his first officer the friend of his heart, all the crew his neighbors' children and the companions of his boyhood, and the ship and her contents the property of those who had fostered his efforts to aid himself, and watched with growing interest the development of his faculties; and one of the ship's company the son of Captain Rhines, his friend, and his father's friend from childhood.

But the unflinching nerve, cool judgment, and

quickness of perception, not to be confused by any imminence of danger whatever, inherited from the rude and iron race to which he belonged, stood him now in good stead. Walter Griffin had been in peril before, and borne it as best he might; but in this hour of supreme need, he knew, as never before, communion with Heaven. Shutting himself in his state-room, he took from his chest the Bible Charlie Bell gave him when he first went to sea, and opened it with an inward prayer that he might be directed to some comforting passage. His eye fell upon the verse, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass."

Then the noble youth, who had engaged in the rescue of Peterson from the purest motives of philanthropy and affection, thus exposing himself to the vengeance of Lemaire, whose hired assassins were now upon his track, thirsting for his young life, flung himself upon his knees, and with an aching heart, sought aid and direction from God. But even in this, his noble, unselfish nature came out. He entreated that he might have strength and wisdom given him to plan and act for others, and not for himself, and prayed that if

any life was sacrificed, it might be his, who, by incredulity and neglect of timely warning, had occasioned the present peril, that the blow might fall on him, and not on Ned and the ship's company.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BLOODY FLAG.

WHEN Walter rose from his knees, he called the mates and John Rhines below, and said to them, "Friends, that brigantine coming up so fast under our lee is a pirate."

"That," said John Rhines, "is the last thing I should ever have thought of."

"I have had my suspicions for the last half hour," said Ned, "since the studding-sails were set, and the ship kept off her course."

"It is the same Guineaman," said Walter, "that lay near us at St. Pierre, only she has a long gun mounted now; it was in the hold then. I was told she was a pirate, but could not believe it; however, I did as much as this: I bought a venture of rifles and ammunition, enough to arm four or five such crews as ours, thinking it would be well to have them on board. She is coming up fast, and will be to windward of us soon. Let me

have your minds ; you know what our crew are, every one of them gunners from boyhood."

"Well, Captain Griffin," replied Cameron, "I've had some experience with these fellers in the English service. I have chased and aided to capture them. When they undertake to board a vessel, they are armed with boarding-hatchets, pistols, and knives. Now, if it was a dead calm, so that they undertook to board us in boats, we could kill every man of them, with little or no risk to ourselves, because the vessel couldn't come up to aid them ; but with this breeze she can play all around us, and knock us all to pieces with her long gun, out of the range of small arms, and we not able to do a thing."

"But," said Ned, "if she sinks us, they know very well they will lose the money, for I have no doubt they watched us all the time we were in port, and know what we have on board."

"True, but they can rake us with grape-shot, that will not sink the vessel, but kill or drive us from the deck, then board the vessel, just as I've seen boys kill all the bumble bees, and then take the honey."

"Mr. Cameron," said Walter, "you've had a

whole life's experience at sea, in all kinds of service; won't you take command of the ship?"

"No, Captain Griffin; your pluck is as good as mine, and your head is better, and whatever I can aid you by advice, when the time comes I will. There's one thing we can try; put the ship before the wind: we may outsail him going free, and perhaps dodge him in the night; at any rate, a stern chase is a long chase, and it will give us more time to consult."

Now that Walter had unfolded the affair to his companions, and above all to his God, he felt once more like himself, and going on deck, put the ship before the wind. It was soon evident, however, that escape was out of the question, the brigantine still gaining steadily, though less rapidly than before.

"Call the men aft, Mr. Gates," said the captain.

When they were all together, he said, "Shipmates, that vessel astern is a pirate. I have been trying to escape her, but it is no use. On the wind or off, she's too much for us; to surrender is death, for their plan nowadays is to kill all hands. The officers and Mr. Rhines have determined to sell their lives as dear as possible; will you stand by us and do the same?"

The men looked at each other, and then, as by a common impulse, turned their eyes on Sewall Lancaster. Perceiving that he was expected to speak, Sewall, after first removing his quid and depositing it in a pocket in the bosom of his shirt for future use, drew the buckle of his belt a hole or two, and said, "Here's four of us, I, Dan Eaton, George Merrithew, and Sam Hadlock, have been under fire together before this ; so has the cap'n and mate : we didn't flunk then ; I don't go in for any flunking now. I've been sailing the seas now some years, and in a good many different vessels, but I never was in a vessel before, where, from the cap'n to the cook, all the ship's company were just like brothers. I only speak for myself : I say, fight the bloody murdering thieves just as long as there's a handspike, a sheath-knife, or a pound of that old iron there abaft the foremast, left, or the cook has got a quart of hot water ; and if we must go, we'll all go together. If I only had the rifle that's hanging in the bracket over the old kitchen fireplace at home, I'd send some on 'em where they wouldn't come back in a hurry."

"That's the talk, Sewall," said Danforth Eaton, in which assent to the opinion of the speaker all

the others united. "There's a good crowd of us, and if we only had something to fight with, we might give 'em some."

"There is something to fight with, Sewall," said the captain. "I have got rifles enough in the sail-room, that I bought for a venture, to give every man in the ship four or five apiece."

"And the good stuff to put in 'em, cap'n?"

"Yes, plenty of powder and balls."

At this announcement Lancaster jumped clear from the deck, and slapping Merrithew on the shoulder, said, "Cap'n, you're the best man, and tell the best news of anybody I've seen since I wore a beard; just give me, and George, and that long-legged, squint-eyed old Dan Eaton them ere shooting-irons, and if we don't put a bullet into every part of them scallawags, you may call me a liar."

It was singular to see how completely the presence of mutual peril, and of unlimited confidence in each other, seemed for a time to obliterate all titles of distinction. The crew addressed each other by old school-boy names. It was Dan, Sewall, George, Enoch, Robert, and often Walter, Ned, and Cameron.

The brigantine was now close at hand, and

every preparation was made for defence. The pile of iron was overhauled, and those pieces most effective and convenient to handle were piled along the waterways, upon each side of the ship; there was a harpoon on board the ship, kept for striking porpoises, and among the old iron a whaling spade, a broad, sharp-edged steel instrument, used by whalers for cutting the blubber from a whale, and two lances, used to inflict the mortal wound upon a whale when wearied — a weapon more terrible than which it would be difficult to find: these were all ground, and staffs fitted to them. Bags of coffee, and barrels of sugar, and spare sails were got up from below, and a sort of breast-work made aft with loopholes, forming both a cover and a convenient rest for rifles. In this were placed Sewall, Lancaster, Merrithew, and Eaton, with four rifles apiece, and plenty of ammunition. Bags of coffee were also placed along the rails from forward to aft on either side, as it was impossible to anticipate the point of attack.

The cook, Sam Holland, was about as original a specimen as you would find in a day's walk; a great double-jointed creature, with red hair and freckled face; never had been to sea, or seen a

vessel before he shipped; excessively green and awkward, and furnishing plenty of sport to the crew; but for all that, was a good cook, having served in that capacity many winters in a logging camp. Born and brought up in the woods, he was an excellent shot, possessed of enormous strength, and as devoid of fear as of education or manners. Sam instantly began to heat water by making pieces of iron hot and dropping them into barrels of water, avowing that he would have enough to scald a hog, and in this manner soon heated a large quantity.

Knowing the skill of this great awkward creature as a rifleman, Lancaster and Eaton did their best to induce him to come into the breastwork with them; but Sam utterly refused. "He wasn't goin' to be hemmed up there — not he; there was little chaps enough to shoot; it took him to handle iron; he was goin' on his own hook." Iron weights of fifty-six pounds were much used, in those days, for scales, as fish and other articles were sold by gross weight, one hundred and twelve pounds for a quintal; there were several of these amongst the old iron; Sam had collected them, also several other large pieces, which nobody aboard could lift

but himself, and "declared to man" — a favorite expression of his — that he would give it to 'em, "ter lather, ter split, ter bang." Elwell, who was an old whaleman, selected the lances, harpoons, and spades.

There was but one pair of pistols in the ship; these belonged to Walter, who purchased them in St. Pierre, to gratify Lallemon, when going to visit Lemaire; these he took, with a long-bladed hunting-knife, in a belt. He now ordered the studding-sails and all the light sails taken in, leaving the vessel under good working canvas; also selected a portion of the crew, and stationed them at the braces, with orders not to meddle in the fight even if the vessel was boarded, but keep their stations, and obey his commands. It was singular to notice the readiness with which the crew obeyed the directions of their young captain, and the confidence with which he seemed to inspire them. He then gave the command of the starboard side to Ned, and of the port side to Cameron.

The brigantine luffing suddenly to the wind, a flash was seen, followed by the roar of the piece, and a round shot fell into the water but some few

yards distant from the ship. No attention was paid to this summons. In the course of half an hour another shot carried away the starboard davit of the ship, causing the stern of the boat to drop; the bow-tackle parted at the same time, and she drifted astern.

The wind had now died away to a light breeze, and the brigantine, apparently satisfied that the ship was without cannon, and being now within short hailing distance, ran up the bloody flag, and ordered them to heave to. The order was obeyed, and the Casco now lay apparently at the mercy of her enemy.

A boat was lowered from the brigantine, and filled with men armed to the teeth.

"If we don't give that boat's crew pepper," said John Rhines to Ned, "it will be because bullets won't kill and iron bruise."

Contrary to all expectation, the boat's crew lay upon their oars, while the brigantine, passing astern of the ship to leeward, launched another boat, with a crew nearly as large as that of the other. The brigantine, bringing her topsail to the mast, lay, with her long gun trained to bear upon the ship, evidently expecting resistance, and prepared to support her boats.

An expression of satisfaction passed over the features of Walter, as he saw her take up this position, and he went to each of the men whom he had stationed at the braces, charging them not to be carried away by excitement, and join in the conflict, but to keep an eye on him ; at the same time, in order to reconcile them to their position, telling them that the lives of the ship's company depended upon them.

CHAPTER XIV.

ATTACKED BY PIRATES.

"CAPTAIN," said Sewall Lancaster, "just look up there." Following the direction of his finger, Walter saw a man in the main cross-trees of the brigantine, who had doubtless been sent there to make his officers acquainted with the state of things on board the ship.

"Cap'n, I suppose it's all settled that we're to have a fight for our lives; so it's no great matter how soon we begin, or who strikes the first blow. I do want to take that chap stuck up there to tell 'em what we're about on board here."

"Take him," was the reply.

"Dan," said Sewall, "I'll wage the cross fox-skin I got last winter, that you wanted so much, agin that ere piece of wild cherry tree you've got in your shed chamber seasoning, and roughed out for a gun-stock, that I'll split that thief's nose, and not hurt the sight of either eye, that is, as far as my bullet is consarned."

"Done. I'll take the wager."

The seaman had just seated himself on the after horn of the cross-tree, with his feet around the futtock shroud beneath it, for support, and was commencing to take a survey of the preparations for defence that had been made on board the ship, when Sewall put his rifle to his face. At the report, the man fell headlong against the mainsail, and glancing from thence, struck the deck with such force that the dull thud was heard on board the ship.

"I reckon that ain't a bad barrel," said Sewall; "the stock comes to the face well; but I'm jealous that she throws a grain to the right; hardly think I've won the bet."

His voice was drowned in the fierce yells that arose from the crews of the boats, who, conscious that they were supported by the brigantine, that lay on the quarter of the Casco (her long gun loaded to the muzzle with grape), made a dash for the ship.

The evident design of the pirate was to overawe the crew of the ship with her cannon, distract attention by making the attack in two directions at the same moment, while in case of the boats

being repulsed, the superior sailing qualities of the brigantine would enable him to luff across the stern of the ship, and deliver a murderous raking fire. Had the man sent to the cross-trees made his report, the order for the boats to attack never would have been given. The pirate only expected to encounter such resistance as could be made with handspikes, belaying pins, four or five rusty fowling-pieces, or ballast stones; and perhaps he preferred some show of defence as a justification for the indiscriminate butchery he meditated.

"What a set of reprobates!" said Eaton; "some niggers, some Spaniards, I guess. Don't any on 'em look like Frenchmen." As the boat on the leeward side made directly for the main chains of the ship, he said, "Just look at that cockswain settin' up so pert on the stern; that's no Frenchman or Spaniard — he's some miserable, low-lived Yankee or Englishman. I'll take *him*."

"I'll take that *big nigger*," said Merrithew, "that pulls the after oar."

"I," said Lancaster, "that chap about the color of sweetened buttermilk, that pulls the *bow oar*."

The boat had nearly reached the ship when their rifles made a common report. The cockswain,

dropping the helm, clapped both hands to his side, severely wounded, the blood running over his fingers. The man pulling the after oar fell into the bottom of the boat, his oar going adrift. The bow oarsman fell over, dead, on the oar of the man next him. The boat, under the impetus she had already received, reached the vessel, but without a steersman, and lacking two oars on a side; she came on presenting her broadside, which gave to Lancaster, Merrithew, and Eaton, and all in the after part of the ship an opportunity to pour in a raking fire, which they did not fail to improve, having four rifles apiece. But one man got out of the boat at all, and as he gained the chains, his head was cleft completely in twain by a downright blow from a whaling spade in the hands of Ned. But two men escaped unhurt from this horrible tempest of shot and iron missiles of all kinds. They succeeded in shoving off, and getting out their oars, but were shot, before they had pulled half a dozen strokes, by John Rhines, and the boat, with her freight of dead and wounded, drifted slowly past the stern of the brigantine. The other boat succeeded in reaching the side of the ship, without the loss of a man, as Cameron had ordered

the men under his charge not to pull a trigger till the boat touched the vessel. It so happened that the greater amount of iron, and the heaviest pieces, were on this side of the ship; Elwell was also there with his harpoons and lances, but the best gunners were on the leeward side; the boat also selected to attack to windward was much larger, with a more numerous crew.

The bowman was just shipping his oar, when down came the terrible whaling lance, flung by the practised hand of Elwell; the point, entering between his shoulders, passed right through the body, nailing him to the plank on which he sat. "Reckon I've touched the life," said Elwell. The terrible wound, together with the appalling groans of the wretch writhing in agony on the spear, so terrified the pirates that they attempted to shove off, when Sam Holland appeared at the rail, bare-headed, his red hair streaming in the wind.

"Where did you cum from, and what do you want?" he screeched, in a voice that sounded like a file on iron. "You're goin' round puttin' people to death — are you? Well, take that!" and lifting a fifty-six pound iron weight over his head, he brought it down with such tremendous force upon



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the head of a Portuguese, who was trying to shove off, that it split his skull and went through the bottom of the boat, which instantly began to fill with water. This was the forerunner of a complete shower of iron missiles, more destructive than bullets, inflicting the most terrible wounds. In vain the pirates tried to shove off.

Elwell flung a harpoon, with a warp made fast to it, with such force into the boat, that the iron buried itself in the plank sufficiently to hold her; and the moment any one attempted to cut the warp, he was either knocked over by a piece of iron, or shot by John Rhines.

The voice of Sam was now heard again.

"Sorry, dreadful sorry to keep you waitin'. I'm goin' to give you what Uncle Nathan Dyer gin his sparkd ox;" and grasping the whole shank of a kedge anchor from which only the flukes had been broken, he brought it down lengthwise on the heads of the pirates, shouting all the time, "Stan' from under. I telled you you'd git hurted if you didn't stan' from under; but when a man gives fair warnin', what more kin he do?"

The pile of iron had now become very much reduced, and there was not a single plank left on

the boat's bottom, a timber or thwart that had not been broken by the irons flung into her, nor a single man left alive of the crew; and Cameron cutting the warp, she drifted away even with the water's edge.

Walter was so thoroughly satisfied with the preparations made to repel the boats, that he paid not the least attention to them; his whole thought was directed to the ship, and the few men he had selected to carry out his commands, and to the brigantine, except that before the attack, he gave to Eaton and Lancaster two rifles each, with orders to load and lay them by, and in no case to fire them without his orders.

So unexpected and startling to the pirates was this capacity for resistance, that every one on board the brigantine was completely absorbed in noting the progress of the contest between the ship and the boats.

Walter, after saying to Lancaster in a low voice, "Do you all three keep watch of that long gun, and kill the first man who attempts to fire it; that is what I reserved those rifles for," made a signal to his men stationed at the braces, who with the utmost caution commenced gradually to square

the main and main topsail yards, while he took the tiller from the lee becket, till just as it was evident how the contest would terminate, the main topsail began to fill and the ship to gather headway, gradually approaching the brigantine, her large hulk and sails becalming the head sails of the latter. At this juncture the pirate captain heard the flapping of his head sails, and glancing at the ship, saw in an instant what was going on.

"Brace up! Fire!" he yelled, running himself to the helm. It was too late; the ship was upon him.

"All hands to the braces," shouted Walter, in a tone so proudly exultant that it thrilled every man in the ship.

The yards came round with a will, while Walter shoved the helm hard up.

Those very sailing qualities of the brigantine that enabled her to overtake her prey and escape from her enemies now proved fatal; the flat-built, clumsy ship payed off faster than the sharp, deep vessel, and ran slap into her, smashing the rail, carrying away all the weather-braces of the pirate, and locking yard-arms. If there had only been wind enough, and the ship had been under quick way, she would have cut the brigantine down to the water's edge and sunk her.

The pirate captain had abundant reason for alarm when he saw the Casco filling away to board him, for well he knew that resistance with his diminished crew was out of the question; he therefore hoped, by a discharge of grape, to force the captain of the ship to luff, when she would again be at his mercy. But as the match was about to be applied, the seaman who held it fell dead across the breech of the gun, by a rifle ball from the ship; another caught the match from the deck, but before he could bring it to the vent, a bullet wounded him in the shoulder; with a resolution worthy of a better cause, he took the match in his left hand, when a ball through the head stretched him lifeless on the deck.

CHAPTER XV.

THE END OF A THOROUGH-PACED VILLAIN.

THE instant the vessels came in contact, Cameron, fully alive to all the advantages of the position, shouted, "Lash to him, boys, lash to him as though you loved him," and sprang to aid in executing his order.

While Cameron and the larger portion of the crew were securing the vessels to each other, Lancaster and his two comrades effectually prevented the crew of the brigantine from either cutting the lashings or killing the men who were performing the work; indeed, this had now become comparatively an easy matter, so great was the terror inspired by these unerring rifles; they were also most effectively aided by Sam Holland, who, having collected a great heap of just such pieces of old iron as in his opinion were suitable to throw, amused himself by demolishing every pirate who attempted to cut a lashing, or shoot those engaged in passing them.

Although there was not a man on board more skilful with the rifle than Sam, he seemed altogether to have lost relish for its use.

"I kin shoot jest when I please," said he, "but I never expect to git such a chance to fire iron agin."

One reason of his fancy for throwing might have been, that hitting with bullets required only skill, while this afforded an opportunity for the display of his enormous strength.

"Where you goin' to, you sneaking black thief?" he yelled to a negro, who, with a boarding hatchet in his belt, was ascending the shrouds of the brigantine to cut a lashing that confined the sprit-sail yard of the ship to the fore rigging of her enemy. Catching up the boom-iron of a lower yard by the ring, he swung the great junk of iron over his head, and let drive at him. The missile struck the poor wretch in the small of the back, either breaking his back-bone, or, at any rate, paralyzing him, for the muscles of his arms and legs all relaxed in a moment, and, limp as a rag, he fell between the vessels into the water.

"That chap's black enough to make ink, if he only fell into a common-sized pond," said Sam.

The moment the vessels came together, and Walter perceived that Cameron was making them fast to each other, he beckoned to the men he had stationed at the braces, who, feeling that thus far they had played rather a tame, subordinate part, now, followed by Ned, John Rhines, and Enoch Hadlock, leaped on board the brigantine, where they were instantly engaged in a desperate hand-to-hand conflict with her crew, headed by their captain. It seemed, for a few moments, that Walter and his little band must, after all, fall victims to their own ardor and imprudence in thus flinging themselves into the midst of a band of men armed with pistols, cutlasses, boarding-pikes, and accustomed to the use of such arms, and who, expecting no quarter, fought with all the energy inspired by despair. After the first discharge, there was no time to reload, and they fought with clubbed rifles at a great disadvantage, and grievously outnumbered, while the pirates, encouraged by the small number of their antagonists, pressed upon them from every side; indeed, nothing but the great strength of John Rhines saved them from utter destruction. Having beat the stock of his rifle to pieces, he brandished the heavy

barrel ; and where he struck it required no second blow. Ned received a wound in the arm ; John, a pistol ball through his hand ; Walter, a gash on the head from a cutlass. Enoch Hadlock was shot through the body ; Henry Griffin received a ball in the shoulder ; Blaisdell and Atherton were killed outright. The efforts of the pirates seemed chiefly directed against Walter, and he experienced many hair-breadth escapes. A burly pirate aimed a blow at his neck with a cutlass, that would have proved fatal, as he was occupied in wresting the butt of his rifle from the death-grasp of a man who clung to it as he fell, when Ned ran him through the throat with a pike he had drawn from the dead body of Atherton. The yells of the pirates now grew fierce and exultant.

"A thousand dollars to the man who kills the Yankee captain," shouted the leader of the pirates, who presented a ghastly sight. He was naked to the waist, his belt garnished with pistols, and the blood from a wound in his forehead had run over the naked flesh and hung in clots from his long red beard.

Walter received a flesh-wound in the thigh, his clothes and hat were riddled with bullets, and Sam

Elwell fell dead at his feet, slain by a pike-thrust aimed at him.

They were now reduced to eight in number. All of them, more or less wounded, and bleeding freely, had been forced back to the very stern of the vessel, and must either be thrust overboard or perish by the superior number and weapons of their antagonists.

"John Rhines," shouted the pirate captain, "I've got you now just where I want you. You've forgotten me, but," he exclaimed with a fearful oath, "I've not forgotten you, nor old Ike Murch, nor the wolf trap, nor the time you set the dog on me. You're mine, you bloody mean spawn of a Yankee; you've got no dog to take your part now;" and grinding his teeth with rage he levelled a pistol.

"Pete Clash," exclaimed John.

"Ay, Pete Clash;" but just as he was about to pull the trigger, an iron bolt from the ship struck the barrel of the pistol with a force that sent it whirling over into the sea. This was a signal for a shower of iron missiles of all kinds, from the high bulwarks of the ship, upon the heads of the pirates, and to which, coming from above, they could make no effectual resistance.

"Mingled with rifle bullets, Uncle Isaac sends you this," said Walter; and drawing from its sheath the long, keen hunting-knife which Uncle Isaac had taught him to throw, and which had been given him just before he sailed from home as a memento of his deceased friend, he flung it at the pirate captain with such force and accuracy of aim that it buried itself in his neck just above the collar-bone; and vomiting blood, he pitched forward in the agonies of death.

The voice of Sam Holland was again heard above the noise of the conflict, shouting, "Git out of that tall grass, I tell you. Did you think I was goin' to bile water, and burn wood, and sweat myself over the fire for nothing?" and he proceeded to pour a whole mackerel barrel of hot water upon the heads of the pirates. This ended the contest, as all the remaining crew of the brigantine leaped overboard, preferring death by drowning to the agony caused by scalding water.

But four of the pirate crew were now alive, and they so burned and battered with missiles of all kinds, and pierced with shot, that they died during the night, and thus defrauded the gallows.

Walter now called his men around him, and

thanked them for the coolness and resolution they had manifested, and for their prompt obedience to his commands, reminding them of their obligations to a higher Power for their escape from death. He also told them that they were welcome to the weapons they had used so well, and gave one to every man in the ship.

The exultation natural to men in their situation, who had not only defended themselves, but also destroyed the crew and captured the vessel of the enemy, was moderated by the loss of three of their companions. Walter felt the death of Elwell and Blaisdell keenly; their parents were his father's near neighbors; they had both been with him as shipmates in the Arthur Brown, and Elwell had lost his life by a thrust intended for himself. Lancaster and Eaton, after the conflict, looked in vain for the man whom Lancaster had shot in the cross-trees of the brigantine.

"They have thrown him overboard," said Ned; "it's no use to look."

"Well, Dan," said Sewall, "I know you want the fox-skin, and you shall have it; it's no time on this glad day to make close bargains with stanch friends."

"And you shall have the cherry tree," said Eaton, "for I know you want that."

John Rhines had turned over the body of the pirate captain, and was contemplating the face, grim and ghastly in death, of the man who had sought his life and died cursing him. He strove in vain to recall some resemblance in the features before him to those of the boy with whom he once used to play. At length he called Lancaster and Eaton, and said to them, —

"Danforth, I want you and Sewall to take a good look at that dead man, and see if you ever saw him before."

After a close scrutiny, both replied in the negative.

"Why, yes, you have, a hundred times; knew him as well as you know me. That is Pete Clash."

"I know better than that," said Eaton. "I knew him well enough when he was a youngster, and an ugly, unlicked cub he was."

"Well, that is he. I never should have known him. But a person changes a good deal from the time they are smooth-faced till they become a man, and a pirate to boot."

"There is an easy method of settling that," said

Lancaster, ripping up with his sheath-knife the left leg of his trousers, and laying bare the flesh. "There," he said, touching with his toe a large scar on the leg, "are the marks of Uncle Isaac's wolf trap. I mind right well when Uncle Isaac served him that trick, and everybody said it was a pity it hadn't been his neck; but that ere wasn't to be; he was to be killed and end his race right here."

"Who's Pete Clash?" asked Ned, whose curiosity was excited by this conversation. "What did he want to kill you for, Mr. Rhines, and what made Uncle Isaac catch him in a wolf trap?"

"Tell him, John," said Walter.

"He was a Nova Scotia boy," said John, "who came to our place a good while ago, when Charlie Bell, Fred Williams, and myself were boys. He run away from the vessel, and hid in the woods till she was gone. When he came out he was in shirt and trousers, barefoot and bareheaded, and one leg of his trousers was torn off at the knee; he was dirty, lousy, and half starved. Uncle Isaac Murch took pity on him, gave him a suit of clothes, hat, and shoes, and told Uncle Jonathan Smullen, if he would take him in, he would give him flour,

meat, and one thing and another, to help keep him. Fred and I used to play with him, and once in a while Charlie Bell, when he came over from Elm Island to see me."

"I shouldn't think you would have played with such a bad fellow."

"After Uncle Isaac clothed him up, and old Aunt Smullen cut his hair, and he got cleaned up, he appeared quite well; and then he told such a pitiful story, as how he was a poor fatherless boy, and his mother got drunk and abused him, beat him with the fire shovel, and finally bound him apprentice to the captain of the vessel he run away from, and he flogged and starved him, and locked up his clothes when he was in port, for fear he would run away, and that was the reason he had no better clothes."

"Did you believe all that?" asked Walter.

"Yes; you know boys are apt to believe everything they are told; but what made us more inclined to believe him was, Charlie Bell said he knew apprentices aboard English ships had oftentimes a hard life of it; that they were rope's-ended by the captain, kicked and cuffed by the sailors; that he knew a boy that was beat so, because he

spilt some tar on a new topsail, that he died on account of it. So we pitied him, and tried to make the best of him, and loved to hear the stories he told about where he'd been, and what he'd seen in Nova Scotia, till we found out they were all lies, and that he would swear, and had no sort of principle; abused old Mr. Smullen and his wife, and was a real young villain. I left off going with him then, for I saw he was putting mischief in all the boy's heads; but Jack Godsoe, Ike, and Sam Smikes were just fit tools for him to work with, and Fred Williams loved mischief so well that he kept on with 'em after I left, though Fred had principle at bottom, but got carried away, and didn't really know how bad they were. This troop, keeping together, went on from one thing to another, doing little petty mischief, till at length Pete coaxed them to fling some fish (that Uncle Isaac was curing in our cove) from the flakes into the sand, and some of them into the water."

"What!" said Walter, "after Uncle Isaac had clothed, shod, and provided a home for him?"

"Yes; that was Pete Clash, right out; but he carried his goods to the wrong market. Uncle

Isaac set a wolf trap beside the flake, covered up in sand, and Pete walked into it, and it hurt him terribly."

"And that's the scar of it on his leg, that you were looking at."

"Yes."

"How did he get out of it?"

"Uncle Isaac took him out; he was hid in the bushes on the bank. Pete screamed so, he was heard a mile off. Uncle Isaac took him, trap and all, and made him think he was going to drown him. Pete begged and plead for his life, and upon his promising to clear out in the first Nova Scotia vessel that came in the spring, he opened the trap, and Pete hobbled off. He was quiet enough that winter; had to be, for he went half the winter on crutches."

"But what did he hate you so for, and want to kill you? and what did he mean by saying that you had no dog to take your part now?"

"He hated me because I wouldn't play with him, or have him at my house, and because I kept Fred from going with him as much as he otherwise would; and he pretended to believe that I put Uncle Isaac up to set the wolf trap, because he

borrowed it of us. Then he hated Uncle Isaac, and hated me because Uncle Isaac liked me."

"Did you know what Uncle Isaac wanted of the trap?" asked Walter.

"No; thought he wanted to trap a wolf. Pete's leg got well. In the course of the winter a vessel from Halifax came in, and he got a chance to go in her; but he wanted to do something to Uncle Isaac, and give me a licking, before he went, and worked upon Fred, Sam, and Jack Godsoe, till he got them ripe for it. They were all sitting down on the bank consulting what they should do to Uncle Isaac, whether to pull up his corn, throw his sheep into the well, or bark a young orchard, that he had planted and set his life by, when I came upon and overheard them."

"That was great," said Ned; "what did they do?"

"They told me if I would promise not to tell, it was well, if not, they would lick me within an inch of my life. I wouldn't promise, and they pitched into me. I knocked Jack and Fred down, and should have handled the whole of them, if my foot had not slipped so that I fell down; then they all piled on to me."

"How mean that was!" said Ned.

"Did Fred Williams go in for that?" asked Walter.

"Yes; but he was sorry enough for it afterwards. I don't know but they would have killed me if our dog Tige had not heard my cries for help, and come on the leap. The first thing they knew, he was among 'em. O, he was an awful dog, savage as a wolf, when his temper was up; and it was up *then*, I tell you. Smikes climbed up into a tree, and got clear. He bit Pete through both hands, and tore half his chin off (if it was not for that long red beard, you could see the scar of it now); but he tore Fred the worst, bit off an artery in his leg, and if father hadn't come and clapped his finger on it, would have bled to death; but it was the salvation of Fred, he kept better company after that, and became a first-rate man."

"What became of Pete, and the rest? What was done to them?"

"Pete went off the next morning. Smikes and Jack got an awful whipping, and Jack run away to sea. I have heard that some of our folks saw him afterwards on board a Guineaman, with Pete; and when I found Pete was here, I expected to find

Jack too. Jack's father, mother, and all his folks are real nice people; but Jack was always a bad egg. Pete might have been a likely man. Uncle Isaac and all of us pitied and were disposed to do all we could for him; but he always stung the hand that helped him. He had just as good a chance to make something of himself as Charlie Bell; and there he lies in his blood, with, no doubt, the blood of many innocent people on his hands."

"Do you know," said Walter, pointing to the gash on his neck, "whose knife made that?"

"Yours," said Ned; "I saw you fling it."

"Did you ever see that knife before, John?" asked Walter, drawing it from the sheath and handing it to him.

"See it. Yes, it was Uncle Isaac's, that he carried more than thirty years. I used to coax him to sell it to me; but he said his Indian father gave it to him, and he never would part with it, and never went into the woods without it."

"His wife gave it to me before we came away, to remember him by; she could not have given me anything that I should think so much of. He taught me to fling it; he and I have played with it, throwing it at his barn door, and at the oven stopper, rainy

days, by the hour together ; but I little thought then I should ever kill anybody with it. I have often heard father and other old people say that there couldn't be any sort of a story got up that would be so strange as things that have really taken place in the world, and now I believe it ; for what could be more strange than this sight before our eyes ; that Pete Clash, who did his best to injure Uncle Isaac, his first and best friend, hated and was just about to shoot me, because Uncle Isaac loved me, should be killed with Uncle Isaac's knife, and my life saved at the same moment by it. I suppose, as Aunt Molly Bradish would say, if she was alive, 'It was all ordered.'"

CHAPTER XVI.

A THRILLING DISCOVERY.

THE conversation was here interrupted by Lancaster, who came up from below to say that Eaton was ready for another patient.

Danforth Eaton had been in the army throughout the entire war of Independence, and having, at that day, when surgeons were exceedingly scarce in the American army, been often detailed to aid in amputation and the dressing of wounds, possessing a natural aptitude, had picked up considerable knowledge, and in the present necessity volunteered to do what he could in the capacity of surgeon. Surgical instruments were found in the brigantine, and bandages and lint, also surgical books, written in French, that Ned and Walter could read to him.

In the case of Hadlock, the ball had passed through without touching any vital part, and could be felt under the skin on the back. Griffin's

wound was slight, and the ball, which was nearly spent, had not penetrated deeply, and was easily extracted. As the wounds of these men were the most severe, they had been attended to first.

John, Walter, and Ned, while waiting their turn, viewed the body of Clash, and passed the time in conversation. Cameron, in the mean time, had, with the crew, repaired the damage to the rigging of the brigantine, and separated the vessels. There was plenty of round shot aboard, with which the dead bodies of Clash and his crew were sunk. The deck was cleaned, and the bodies of Elwell, Blaisdell, and Atherton prepared for burial on the morrow, in the best manner the circumstances permitted. As Walter wished to remain on board the brigantine, and Ned's wounds were slight, he gave him charge of the ship, with Cameron for first, and Merrithew for second mate.

There was not a boat between the two vessels, except the ship's long boat, which was lashed in the chocks, and for this reason the brigantine was still fast to the ship by a hawser. The ship's yawl had been set adrift by a shot from the pirate, one of the pirate's boats was knocked to pieces with the iron flung into her, and another gone adrift

full of dead and wounded ; that boat, however, could still be seen in the distance, and being nearly calm, Walter resolved to obtain it.

The wind was very light, and as the brigantine neared the boat, a rope was flung into it, to which was made fast a large hook, that, catching into a thwart, held her till she could be properly secured : thus there was now a ready means of communication, when the weather permitted, between the vessels. No iron of sufficient weight to injure this boat essentially had been thrown into her, the execution on that side of the ship being chiefly accomplished by rifle bullets ; and as the weapons had been in the hands of those who knew how to use them, and there was nothing to obstruct the view, very few of the balls had missed their aim and struck the boat : thus there were only a few shot-holes above the water-line, and these being plugged, the boat was fit for instant use. A most horrible, sickening sight was presented in the interior of that boat. With his back and shoulders propped against the forward thwart, in a half reclining position, was the man whom Ned struck with the whaling spade, just as he gained the ship's rail ; the weapon, having been ground to a

keen edge, had passed through the skull, left eye, and upper jaw, but was arrested by the lower, and the different portions of the head had fallen apart, the nose, one eye, and cheek on one side, the remaining portion on the other. Part of the brain, mixed with clotted blood, had fallen down over his throat and naked breast.

The two men killed at the oars still grasped those implements, and the rest lay piled on each other across the thwarts and in the bottom of the boat, in all directions. The cockswain, who had so excited the ire of Eaton, and who was the first to fall, lay at full length, in a pool of clotted blood, his head propped against the stern-post, and to first view seemed dead; but a closer inspection made it evident that there was life, although scarcely perceptible.

"I'll finish him and put him out of misery," said Eaton, catching up the oak tiller to knock him on the head.

"Stop," cried Walter; "drop that tiller. Dan, I'm ashamed of you; let the poor wretch die in peace. You don't want to commit murder."

"Murder!" replied Eaton, at the same time throwing down the weapon. "What was he trying to do to us?"

"He is past doing anything to us now. Do you want to strike a dying man?"

"P'raps he'd git over it," said Lancaster, "if he was took kere on."

"What would be the use of that?" said Eaton; "he'd only have to be hung, and die twice. He don't sense anything; better kill him; he's so near through, it will be harder for him to come to, than it will for him to keep on."

"I say, heave the rest overboard, drop the boat astern, and let him lay; he'll be gone by morning watch."

"Take him aboard," said Walter, "and go to work and do the best you can for him: perhaps he may live to repent of his sins, and find mercy, even if he is hung at last."

"This ere chap's a Yankee or an Englishman, I know. I s'pose there's allowance to be made for these niggers, Spaniards, and outlandish fellows; but I don't believe there is, or ought to be, any marcy for a man born of Christian parents, brought up in a Christian country, that goes and jines these ere cutthroats to butcher his own kin."

"Don't talk so, Eaton; you don't know how soon you may need mercy yourself. If that pistol bullet,

that made that hole in your cap, had gone a few inches lower, you wouldn't have been here now. It don't look well, nor is it well, for folks who have just been saved from destruction, to refuse mercy the same hour to their fellow-men."

"Wal, cap'n, I s'pose you're right; I know you are; but it does rile me so to see one of my countrymen consorting with niggers and cutthroats. I'll do all I kin for him, but that's not much."

"If he lives," said John, "he may give some information that will lead to the capture of other pirates, and save many lives."

When, in consequence of the restoratives applied by Eaton, consciousness returned, and the wounded pirate found himself a prisoner, he expressed the wish that they had let him die.

"It was no fault of mine that they didn't, you miserable villain," replied his physician. "I would have knocked you in the head with the boat's tiller, with as good a will as ever I did a rat, if it hadn't been for the cap'n."

The two vessels kept in company, the brigantine shortening sail whenever she was like to outrun the ship, Lancaster acting as first, and John Savage as second mate. Contrary to the

opinion and desire of his physician, and, indeed, to the expectations of all, the pirate began slowly to mend. He was sullen and reserved, and either could not or would not enter into conversation (with the exception of giving his name as Richard Arkwright, and saying that he belonged to Shields, England), save what was absolutely necessary for the supply of his wants.

One night, John Rhines, finding it difficult to sleep on account of the pain of his wound, turned out, and sent the seaman who was watching with Arkwright to his hammock, and took his place.

There was something in the tones of this man's voice, and in the expression of his features (now that the deadly pallor that at first overspread them was gradually giving place to the hues of returning health), that seemed strangely familiar to John, and continually reminded him of some well-known face.

On the other hand, the wounded man seemed to conceive an aversion for him at the first glance, to shrink from him with disgust, motioned him away, and when obliged to endure his presence, it was with a dogged obstinacy, that resisted every effort on John's part to engage him in conversation.

"Walter," said John, the next morning, "I know I've seen this man before somewhere."

"That is not at all probable, for he is an Englishman; you may have seen some one like him, perhaps. I have seen persons separate that I thought were the same; but when I came to see them together, there was a vast difference."

"Well, I can't get it out of my head that I have seen that man before. I mean to sit up with him again to-morrow night, and I don't believe but what it will come to me."

That night the man who was watching with the buccaneer fell asleep, and the wounded man, who appeared too feeble to help himself, crawled to the deck, and was about to throw himself overboard, when he was seen by the watch on deck, and carried back. The succeeding night, John, true to his promise, sought his hammock. As he sat running over in his mind the record of persons he had known, and endeavoring to recall their names and features, Arkwright, waking, asked for water. John opened the door of the lantern that hung from a deck beam, bolstered him up in bed, and put the water to his lips. John had not seen his features so plainly before since he had been taken

from the boat and become conscious ; something in the expression of them, as he laid him back on the pillow, in a moment flashed conviction upon his mind, and solved all his perplexities. With the utmost difficulty he repressed an exclamation of astonishment. John had dozed at intervals through the night, whenever the pain of his hand permitted ; but he had now made a discovery that kept him thoroughly awake during the remainder of it. The instant the day broke, calling Walter from his berth, he said, —

“ I told you I had seen that man before ; it has all come to me now ; it is John Godsoe.”

“ Impossible, John ; it can't be.”

“ I tell you it is. I wouldn't give a farthing to have him tell me so. What a pity we hadn't let him die in the boat ! Why did we ever try to bring him to ? Only think of it, Walter Griffin, only think of it — for you and I to carry home John Godsoe, my old schoolmate and playmate, and our neighbor's son, to be hung as a pirate.”

“ It is dreadful, John ; and what must be the feelings of his family, all his brothers steady and industrious, his parents good Christian folks ! His poor mother long ago gave him up for dead, and ceased to mourn for him.”

"That is not all. Danforth Eaton, who wanted so much to knock him on the head, is his own cousin. I see now why he called himself Arkwright. He knows he shall be hung, and don't mean his parents and kindred shall ever know what end he makes."

"That shows there's some shame left, at any rate."

"Why couldn't we, when we get in with the land, give him a chance to escape?"

"I don't know as it would be right. He is a murderer. God has put him into our hands, to suffer the just penalty of his crimes."

"Well, I hope, if he sets out to jump overboard again, he'll make it out. I think it was because he knew me that he attempted it."

"John, after all, I can't believe it is him."

"I know it is ; but I can tell you what will settle that matter at once."

"What?"

"When we were boys at school, there was a sailor belonged in our place by the name of John Strout, a friend of Ben's, who knew how to tattoo with India ink. John Godsoe, Fred Williams, and myself, coaxed him to prick figures into our arms.

I had a foul anchor; Godsoe, a pair of doves sitting on the branch of a tree, between the shoulder and elbow, on his left arm; and Fred, the American eagle, with the flag in his beak."

"I suppose you must be right; I was too young when he left home to remember much about him. Let us keep the matter to ourselves till I can have time to think it over; that is, if we can, for I expect when he comes on deck Eaton will find him out, probably our Henry, and perhaps more of them.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE HOLLOW TIMBER.

WALTER now proceeded to make a thorough scrutiny of the brigantine. He found her abundantly supplied with material and stores of all kinds: ground tackle, spare sails, rigging, shot, shell, a well-filled magazine of powder, a superb arm chest, containing a large quantity of arms of all kinds used on shipboard, which gave evidence of having been kept with great care, a medicine chest, and accommodations for a large number of men. And the hammocks and every part of the ship were thoroughly clean; but there was no slave deck, no extra quantity of shackles or water casks; in short, everything that would intimate that she had ever been employed as a slaver was wanting.

He also found charts of all the French, Spanish, English, and Dutch West India islands, together with sailing directions, in manuscript, for small

vessels among the keys, and rough draughts of them. But he and Lancaster scanned every berth, locker, and cranny of the vessel, over and over again, in vain, to find the log-book, or the private papers of the captain.

"If they were pirates," said Lancaster, "they could not have found the business very profitable. I marvel that there is no plunder on board, since they live by plunder."

"You forget," said Walter, "that they were just out of port, and, I have no doubt, had landed everything at Vauclin, and came out with a swept hold, to get our money."

"Which they didn't get," replied Lancaster; "but there must be money somewhere, and we haven't found a copper."

All that rewarded this careful search were some bills, found in a drawer of the cabin table. They were from a house at St. Pierre, running to Henri Lemaire, for rigging and ship-stores for the brigantine Languedoc, delivered to John Skillings, master of said vessel, which, it seemed, was the name Pete Clash had assumed.

"John," said Walter, "we were very short-sighted that we had not searched the body of Clash before we put him overboard."

"I don't believe you would have found anything, if you had; you found no papers in his trunk. These wretches dare not trust each other. I expect there is some hiding-place in the vessel, the secret of which — has died with him — where the papers, and perhaps money, are stowed away."

"The bills we have found," said Walter, "make it evident enough that Lemaire owns this vessel, and paid for her supplies, and that John Skillings, as Clash called himself, was her captain. Lemaire employed all these cutthroats, and was the head of the whole concern. John Godsoe was Clash's mate, lieutenant, or whatever they call it. Now, you know that the connection between Godsoe and Clash was very different from that commonly existing between a pirate captain and his lieutenant; they have been together from boyhood all these years, and, it seems, have stuck to each other; and bad as they were, there might have been between them a real friendship; they might have trusted each other, and John may know Pete's place of concealment."

"I never thought of it in that light. I should think it more than probable."

"That is not all; there might be papers that would directly criminate Lemaire."

"Just so."

"I'm going to see if I can't draw that out of him, by telling him if he goes to the States he will be hung, and his past life and disgraceful end will be known to his parents and townsmen (which by his change of name he evidently wishes to conceal), but if he will furnish information to criminate Lemaire, we will give him a chance to escape. I think I should be justified in letting the lesser villain go, if by thus doing I could make sure of the greater and infinitely more dangerous one."

"At any rate, it's worth trying," said John.

"In the first place," said Walter, "I am going to signalize the ship, and get Cameron on board here. Neither of us have had much experience; we know nothing of villains, their resources, or modes of doing things; but Cameron has been on board men-of-war in all kinds of employ, with all sorts of men, and he may find something that will involve Lemaire directly, without our being under the necessity of compromising with Godsoe, which I do not feel quite prepared to do; but bring

Henri Lemaire to justice *I will*, if it lies within the range of possibilities."

When Cameron came on board, and was informed of the circumstances, he asked to see the chest of Clash, and measured it first outside, and then in.

"I thought," he said, "it might have a false bottom; but it has not."

He examined the ceiling, lockers, transom, and every part of the vessel, and even took down the looking-glass, and sounded every beam that was cased, to find a hollow one; but in vain. At length he lifted a trap-door beneath the cabin table, and they went down into the run. Respecting this portion of the search, in order that our young friends may have a clear perception of the matter, some explanation may perhaps be needed. The run, as sailors term it, is the extremity of the stern, where the planking of the vessel on both sides meets the stern-post. In those days the cabin was all beneath the deck, and was formed by laying a platform across the stern at a sufficient depth to admit of standing erect beneath the deck beams, and a bulk-head (or partition, as a landsman would call it) divided this space from the rest of the

vessel, it being lighted by windows in the stern and sky-lights in the deck above. Beneath this platform is a dark, narrow space, including the extremity of the keel and the foot of the stern-post, which, as the carpenters leave the vessel, is a part of the hold ; but as it is small, of unsuitable shape to receive casks or bales, especially in a small, sharp-built vessel, it is used to stow away odds and ends. It is often used by mates and masters as a place of deposit for articles that they have no particular desire should meet the eye of the custom-house officer, in which case it is divided from the rest of the vessel by a bulk-head, and then a scuttle is needed to reach it.

We were once in a vessel, that, being full built, had much room in this portion of her ; and it was filled with kegs of powder, that, we presume, did not benefit the revenue.

Into this part of the brigantine Cameron, with a lantern in one hand and a top-maul in the other, led the way, examined the ceiling, and every part of the hold and bulk-head for some seam or crevice that might betoken a place of concealment, but in vain.

“The carpenter that built this vessel,” said

Cameron, wiping the sweat from his brow, "knew his business, and did it; for here, out of sight, everything is smoothed up as well as though it was on the upper deck."

They now examined the dead-wood. It may be well for our readers to understand that all the timbers of a vessel do not cross the keel, but at a certain distance from the stern-post they are bolted to a mass of timber, which is itself bolted to the keel and stern-post. First a very large timber is laid upon the keel; this is called the dead-wood, and runs from the after floor timber to another timber set up against the stern-post and fastened to it, which is the dead-wood of the stern-post. On top of this dead-wood comes a knee, filling the angle of the keel and stern-post; then a keelson running over the floor timber and abutting against the knee; then a second keelson, that covers the junction of the knee and the first keelson, in order (to use the carpenter's phrase) to kill that joint, that is, prevent its doing injury or causing weakness; and where great strength is required, another timber, called a rider, because it rides the others on top of the whole; these, taken together, are frequently called the dead-

wood. These timbers in the brigantine were, for a vessel of her size, very large and long, running far forward on the keel, and the rider was well studded with large bolts.

"There is nothing hollow there," said Cameron, as, after striking repeated blows on the wood he listened to the sound produced; "but I call that heavy fastening," — pointing to the heads of the bolts, — "heavy enough for a ship of a thousand tons. Wal, I'm beat; if there's any hiding-hole in this vessel, I can't find it."

"Now, John," said Walter, "there is no other way but to endeavor to get some information from Godsoe. Which of us shall make the attempt, you or I? You have been at school with him, know all about him, and he is about your own age, while I am but a boy to him."

"I think you had better do it, as master of the vessel; you know, if he proves stubborn, you can call me in at any moment."

The wounded man was now so far recovered that, had he been permitted, he could have walked about; and a pair of light handcuffs were put on his wrists at night, to prevent his getting out of his hammock and throwing himself overboard, as

the sailors who watched with him often fell asleep, and cared not a straw whether he killed himself or not. As he had persistently resisted all attempts to engage him in conversation, was in an unconscious state when the conflict ended, and made no inquiries as to the result of it, he was totally ignorant of the fate of his companions, but supposed they were prisoners, like himself.

About eight o'clock in the evening, Walter went to the hammock of the pirate, sent the seaman, who was keeping watch, on deck, and turning the lantern in such a manner that the light would fall on his face, said, "You are John Godsoe."

The pirate was evidently deeply moved by this abrupt announcement; but with astonishing command of nerve, he repressed all outward evidence of emotion, save a slight quiver of the upper lip, and a trembling of the eyelids, as he replied, in a surly tone, —

"If you know your own meaning, it is more than I do. I want no favors of you; if you are keeping me alive to hang me, can't you be satisfied with that? I have given you my name once — Richard Arkwright."

"You are lying. You may have borne that

name, and perhaps a dozen others; but the name your parents gave you is John Godsoe."

To this the pirate made no reply.

"John Rhines," continued Walter, "knows you; your own cousin, Danforth Eaton, is the man who took care of you, and dressed your wounds; and though he has not recognized you, he will the moment you come on deck in the daytime."

No reply.

"To convince you that you cannot deceive us longer, you have tattooed on your left arm, just below the shoulder, a pair of doves sitting on the branch of a tree; it is but stripping your arm to ascertain that fact. There are others on board who went to school with you, Fred Williams, and John Rhines—at the time that John Strout pricked that device on your arm, a foul anchor on John's, and an eagle on Fred's, up in Captain Rhines's haymow, and who, out of curiosity, looked on; and now that you have begun to regain your natural looks, would recognize you; nor am I ignorant that John Skillings is only another name for Pete Clash."

The pirate lay silent for a few moments, and Walter, who was closely watching his features,

saw two big tears trickle out from beneath his closed eyelids, and course down his cheeks. This touched the heart of the noble-minded youth to the core, and he determined to save him from the gallows.

"Captain," said the pirate at length, "persons like you, who have never taken the first step down hill, or kept company with outcasts and reprobates, are apt to think that there is no particle of any good or decent feeling left in them; but it is not always so. I don't know as it ever is. I never knew you; you was a child when I left home; but I knew all your folks. I knew John Rhines when he sat up with me, Danforth Eaton when he dressed my wounds, and your brother Henry. I recognized all my schoolmates as they have watched with me from time to time. Can you wonder that I should choose to die under an assumed name, rather than to be recognized by my schoolmates as a pirate going to execution, and have the terrible news carried home to my parents, that the boy they did all they could to train up in good ways came to the gallows?"

"No; but the marvel to me is, how the child of old Uncle Edward Godsoe and his wife could ever

become what you have. Never a vessel comes home, but your father is at the wharf, to inquire if they have seen or heard of his boy. The last time I was at home, your poor old father, of a real warm day, came toiling up the hill to our house, all bent over, holding on to his cane with both hands, to inquire if I had heard anything of John. We made him stop to dinner, lie down on the bed and rest, and I took him home, and saw the tears run down your mother's cheeks when he said, 'Sarah, it's the old story — no news of our poor boy.'"

"Has there never been any tidings of me?"

"Once, I believe, they heard that you and Pete Clash were in a Guineaman; some of our boys said they saw you and Pete, but you pretended not to know them."

"Why, then, if you understand my feelings, do you and John Rhines persist in breaking through my disguise, exposing me, and inflicting the last pang upon my parents? Why can't you let me die under my assumed name, or remove these irons from me, permit me to jump overboard, and save yourself all further trouble?"

"Because I am unwilling that your father's son

should be lost, both soul and body; because I want you to live to repent of your crimes, and also to feel justified in saving you from legal punishment; and I think you can give me information that will enable me to do this."

"Captain," was the reply, "I have fallen low enough, but not so low as to betray my comrades. I am not mean enough for that. Perhaps you think affection has no place among beings like us; but bad as he was, I would have stood between Pete Clash and a bullet. I would sooner die on the scaffold, and, what is far more terrible, under my own name, than buy life at any such price as that. If that is the proposition you have to make, go and tell your crew that the man below is John Godsoe, and put me in double irons, that I may not cheat the gallows."

"You can betray no shipmates, for they are all dead."

"Is Clash dead?"

"Yes."

"He is fortunate. I wish it had been my luck. Were the crew killed?"

"Yes, either at the time, or died of their wounds soon after. John Godsoe, you think it is mean to

betray your shipmates, but you didn't think it mean to attack a whole ship's company of your townsmen, your own cousin among them, with the settled purpose of robbing the vessel, and butchering all hands; for you know that your motto was, 'Dead men tell no tales;' the distinction is so fine I fail to see it."

"I am bad enough at the best, and I ask no favors; but I did not know that I was attacking in that ship my townsmen, and my own relative."

"Is that so?"

"It is. All I knew about it was, that we were to lay off and on to watch for an American ship, that Lemaire had given the captain a description of, that had money aboard, and no arms; but, instead of that, you were armed to the teeth, and manned with sharp-shooters."

"Didn't you know that Lemaire offered Pete Clash his share of the plunder and a thousand dollars in gold if he killed me, and that the great motive that set Clash on was not so much the money as the opportunity to kill John Rhines?"

"Not a word of it."

"Didn't you see and recognize John, Dan Eaton, and some of the other boys when you lay so near us at St. Pierre?"

"I was not on board. I was at the north end, and joined the vessel at Vauclin the day before she went to sea."

"Why did Clash keep this from you?"

"For two reasons, I think. He was afraid I would not rob and kill my own folks, because he knew I always had a fear of meeting them somewhere on the sea, and perhaps he might think I would want a portion of the thousand dollars. He and Lemaire had a great deal of privacy together. Lemaire is a mean villain; gets other people to do his work, and wants them to work cheap, too. But what did he want to kill you for, in particular?"

"You know James Peterson, the black fellow they called Flour?"

"Yes."

"A captain sold him to Lemaire. He had got to be a real steady man; had a house, wife and family. I came out here, got him away from Lemaire, and carried him home."

"That was a good thing. He didn't make much out of that nigger, nor in trying to kill you, either, for he lost his vessel and his best men. He's always sailed with a flowing sheet; but I reckon

his luck is going to turn; reckon the devil is going to leave him; hope he will."

"I want to bring Lemaire to justice; and I want direct proof of his connection with pirates. I have searched the vessel from stem to stern to find any papers that might contain information. I know, at least I am confident, there must have been some writings between him and Clash. I believe that if there are such papers, you can put them into my hands. If you will do it, I shall feel justified in permitting you to escape."

"How are you going to get him? He rolls in gold; his means of information are very great; he will get wind of it, and leave the island; or he will bribe the civil authorities; money will do anything there."

"I will run into Vauclin in the night with the brigantine, and send for him to come on board, — he will think it is all right — seize him, and carry him before the authorities; make a public thing of it. Then they will not dare to take a bribe and smooth it over; neither will they be disposed to, when they can seize his estates and help themselves to the whole."

"Then, of course, you will produce me as evi-

dence; and, though *you* may be disposed to let me go clear, *they* may choose to hang me. Then you will have no power to protect me, or fulfil any agreement you may make with me now. When once you have placed me in their hands, it will not be for you to decide what disposition shall be made of me."

"But it is for me to say now; and is it not in your power to furnish me with evidence that this vessel belongs to Henri Lemaire? that he has fitted her out for piratical cruises, and shared in the plunder?"

"Yes, and other vessels than this."

"If you were now ashore at Vauclin, could you take care of yourself?"

"Yes. I have money there, and friends enough, and should be in no danger of detection."

"Then, if you will put into my hands proof sufficient of Lemaire's guilt, I'll permit you to escape in the night, provided you will give me your word and honor that you will not leave till you have put him in my hands; for I must have your assistance to get him on board the vessel."

"My hand; and will you take the word of a pirate?"

"Yes, John Godsoe. I believe that there is that manhood in you, that what you promise you will perform, and I have confidence enough in that opinion to set you at liberty on the strength of it."

"It is a confidence, captain, that you will not find misplaced. I can give you evidence enough to hang Lemaire fifty times, if it were possible. He is no friend or shipmate of mine; never trusted or confided in me; has always treated me like a scullion, beneath his notice; and what I know of his affairs has not come from him. Besides, I owe him a grudge."

"For what?"

"I was there three years ago, so badly wounded in capturing a Spanish brig, that I was obliged to remain on shore all summer. He promised that my wages should go on, and that I should draw my share of what the brigantine made, as I had to pay my own expenses ashore; there was no writing about the matter, and he refused to pay the wages, and cheated me out of a hundred bags of coffee and some linens that fell to my share; and because I complained, and would not keep quiet about it, he hired a Frenchman to waylay and stab me; but the fellow missed his blow, and I killed him. I

always meant to be square with Lemaire, sooner or later; he knows it, and has always given me a wide berth."

As Godsoe ceased speaking, Walter left the hammock, and when he returned, drew a key from his pocket and unlocked the handcuffs on the wrists of his prisoner.

"Thank you, captain. You say you have searched the vessel; have you been down in the run?"

"Yes; went all over it on my hands and knees, with a candle."

"Well, the papers are there."

"Impossible; for we examined every seam and crack, and sounded every timber that could have been made use of."

"Every one but the right one."

"Then there's a hollow timber in the run?"

"Yes, in the dead-wood."

"I can't believe it, for we examined every timber."

"Did you sound every timber?"

"No, only the top one, the rider; for there was no kind of a seam in them, and the top timber was bolted down on them."

"Did you notice that the upper one was scarfed?"

"Yes, but there were bolts through the timber down into the keel, lots of 'em; we knew that it couldn't be lifted to get at the tops of the keelson under it, and there was no seam or joint on their sides."

"Captain, if you had sounded the keelson under the rider, struck the side of it with your maul, you would have found it hollow. Not one of those bolts in the rider enters it three inches; nor do they confine anything; they are just for a blind (monkey bolts), to deceive and make it appear that the timber is bolted down. Will you look in the till of the captain's sea-chest, and bring me a mallet you will find there, and four steel wedges? They are tied together."

Godsoe instructed him in the use of them; and accompanied only by John Rhines, he went into the run. The steel wedges were very thin at their points, and highly polished, so as not to scar the edges of the timber between which they were to be driven. Walter drove two of them on either side, between the edges of the rider and the keelson under it, which was broad and deep,—

broadier than the keel itself,— with very light blows. Instantly this timber, which seemed so firmly bolted, loosened; and driving the wedges sufficiently to make an opening for their fingers, they lifted it off. This rider was held in its place by iron dowels, that were driven into the timber beneath, and their points entered the rider nearly a foot by means of holes, into which they entered easily; the kerfs were also cut strengthening (as the carpenters call it), that is, longest on top, so that the timber went wedging; of course, the moment it was lifted an inch, it loosened at once.

When they had moved the rider, they beheld a sight that filled them with amazement. The timber, which, as we have said, was large, had been dug out in different places between the bolts, in the form of a trough, and was nearly filled with rings, bracelets, gold chains, watches, arms inlaid with silver and gems, and gold and silver coins of all nations and weights; and they were contained in the most singular receptacles — the bottoms of old paint kegs, cocoa-nut shells, sea-shells; horns, sailors' needle-cases were filled with small coin and gold buttons. Oftentimes, at sea, an old shoe, the quarters and heel being cut off, and a piece

of rope-yarn put through the vamp to hang it up, is used to hold grease. Those had been resorted to to hold the most valuable jewels; and some of them, black and mouldy, had evidently been emptied of their grease to make room for these precious articles. But that which interested Walter more than anything else, was a box, very handsomely made of Penang wood, which, on being opened, proved to be filled with letters, bills, receipts, and other papers relating to business transactions between John Skillings and Henri Lemaire. Glancing hastily at the contents, Walter saw that the box contained the information he sought; and quickly replacing the timber, they retired to the cabin.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CAPTURE OF LEMAIRE.

IN these papers Walter found written contracts between Clash and Lemaire, by which it appeared that the latter furnished and fitted the vessel, paying the officers and crew merely nominal wages, and, as an offset to this, giving them a share in the plunder, the remainder belonging to Lemaire, while he was to dispose of their portion of cargoes taken at a fixed rate of commission.

“Now,” said Walter, when they had looked over the papers, “I’ll let this precious rascal know that others are as sharp as he; but it passes my comprehension how so bad a man can appear so well, and how a person who is committing murder and robbery by the wholesale can so still the voice of conscience, and rise above the fear of detection, as to appear perfectly at ease, jovial, enter with zest into all the pleasures of life, and seem entirely devoid of care.”

"Continual practice and a stubborn will," said John, "will enable a person to accomplish apparent impossibilities, and assume for a while the appearance of cheerfulness, even when the viper gnaws within; and there may be hours, when no one sees him, that are hours of slow torture and terror."

"Did you find the information you wanted?" asked Godsoe, when Walter returned to his hammock.

"Yes; all I need to convict Lemaire."

"I can furnish you with more still."

"What is it?"

"The hill near his house is full of concealed vaults, where goods taken from different vessels are stored till such times as he can dispose of them. You thought, and told me, that you made a great bargain in selling your cargo to Lemaire, and taking sugar and coffee; but it was him that made the good bargain, for that sugar and coffee cost him nothing; it came out of those vaults, and had been taken out of an English vessel, together with a large amount of money: the specie paid all expenses, and left thousands of dollars to be divided amongst us besides.

"Is that sugar and coffee that I took home, and that our good folks are using, stolen property?"

"Yes; all of your cargo that was raised at Vauclin. You see, he could afford to bid higher than honest planters for your houses, hardware, and other truck."

"That is not the worst of it; there were your folks going to the store of Fred Williams and buying that coffee and sugar (for I sold a good part of it to him), your poor old father and mother making use of that which their son aided to procure by means of robbery and murder."

"It may seem utterly impossible to you, captain, but I *have* seen the time, not many days ago, that I should have laughed at that, with Pete Clash, as a good joke; but that time has passed by. Since Clash died, and while lying here wounded and a prisoner, and more especially since I have been thrown into company with you and John Rhines, feelings have come up in my mind that were never there before. I began to look back and consider what I am, and what I might have been; to see that I had the same chance to make a man that all the other boys of my age had; that the same effort and resolution that I have put forth in

pirating, exerted in an honest way, would have made me a well-to-do man, and my parents happy, and that too without half the hardships. Here is John Rhines, my schoolmate, and (till I became too vile for him) my playmate, a noble-looking, noble-minded man, beloved by every one, and the pride and comfort of his parents, longing for the time when he shall get home to them — his wife, child, and the neighbors. And here am I about worn out (when, as far as years are concerned, I am but in the prime), cut all to pieces with wounds, and covered with scars that I'm ashamed to show, a vagabond, a common enemy, a disgrace to the mother that bore me, a wretch to be hunted down without mercy. I say, meeting with these old friends in this vessel has set my thoughts to work after a fashion that has made me mad. There's Danforth Eaton, my own cousin, told me he would have knocked me on the head with the boat's tiller, had he not been prevented by you; that is the way in which every good man estimates me. I never thought or cared for it before, when I was among scoundrels; but here, where I am the only villain, it cuts like a knife."

Walter was surprised and deeply affected at

this outburst of feeling from one who had till this moment seemed hard as the flint itself. With little experience of mankind, or of the stirring and conflicting emotions begotten of evil habits and companionship, he remained silent, and felt much relieved, when Godsoe asked, —

“My parents — you said my father was feeble. My mother — how is she? Are they put to it in their old age for a living? Do they suffer?”

“Not by any means. Your father is an old man, and feeble by reason of years; that is, as to walking; but his health is good. Your mother is younger, and has excellent health; is able to do a good deal of work, although she has no need to, for your brother Edward came on the farm, and provides them with every comfort, and is respected by everybody for his kindness to them.”

“Yes,” replied Godsoe, who seemed to find some cause for self-reproach in every subject that came up. “I wonder what they find to say of me. As I lay waiting here, while you were gone to look for those papers, I reflected, there is a young man who seems to have set out and gone on thus far in life filled with the idea of doing all the good he can, while I have been doing all the hurt I could.

If a man had attempted to kill or rob me, I would have had his heart's blood, and not rested till I got it. But here is a man, that I did my best to rob and murder, trying to save me from the gallows, and placing confidence in me, which exceeds all the rest."

"It is true," replied Walter, "that when I was quite young I had an idea — rather a feeling — that I wanted to do good; that it was nobler to think of others, and try to make them happy, than only to be thinking about and striving for our own interests; and I expect a good deal of it came from hearing Uncle Isaac talk. Now, perhaps you may recollect that your father and my grandfather were great friends."

"That I do; they were soldiers together in the old French and Indian war."

"My grandfather was very often sending me down to your house, of a morning before school, of an errand to your father, and I often got there just as your father was reading the Bible at prayers. We had no prayers in our family at that time. Your mother would see me through the window, come out, and bring me in, put me in a little chair beside her, and when all the rest knelt down, I

would do just as they did; then your mother would always give me some nice bit of cake, sap sugar, or something that children like, to put in my tin pail, to carry to school. At first, all I thought about was the cake, and the good old mother who gave it to me; but as I grew older, I began to think of what your father said in his prayer; and I think I received impressions there that always stuck by, and did me good."

"You," replied Godsoe, "grew better under those influences, while I grew worse."

"I have thought since we have been talking in this manner, and going back to childhood almost, how anybody who had such parents, and was brought up as I know you must have been, could ever have come to be —"

Here Walter hesitated.

"Come to be a pirate, you mean," said Godsoe, finishing the sentence for him. "Whether I was worse than other boys of my age, when I was born, I don't know; but I know I was passionate and stubborn. I know, too, I had rather a suspicious temper, and was always imagining that people didn't like me as well as my brother, or other boys in the neighborhood; yet I had a great deal of

affection about me ; I used to want folks to love, and loved my pets dearly. I think it was just the turning of a straw, a very little thing, that, working on my suspicious temper, set me going down hill, and landed me just where I now am, and made me a miserable vagabond, who *ought* to be hung, whether he is or not."

"What was that?" said John Rhines, who just then entered the little room that had been divided by an extemporary bulk-head from the rest of the half-deck.

"Something," was the reply, "that you may recollect. Parson Goodhue, as you know, captain, was in the habit of visiting at your house a good deal, and never went home empty-handed."

"That is very true," said Walter ; "for when we were children, we used to be always contriving to get something for Parson Goodhue, when he came."

"One day I was at your house, seeing your father hive a swam of bees. Parson Goodhue was there, and about going away, and I saw your mother in the buttery, getting good things that I knew were going into his saddle-bags, and the evil one put it into my head to play him a trick,

although I had been brought up with as much respect for him as the king on his throne."

"And he was worthy of it," said Walter.

"That is true; but my love of mischief overpowered all other considerations then. I heard him say that he was going to call at the widow Chase's, who lived next neighbor to us. The widow's husband was a shoemaker, and there was lying behind the house an old grindstone, that he had used all his days to grind shoe knives, and being worn down till it was about the size and thickness of a cheese, had been thrown away. While the parson's horse was hitched to the fence, I took out of the saddle-bag, a large cheese, and putting the grindstone in the place of it, hid the cheese in a hollow log in the fence."

"How did you feel," said John, "after it was over?"

"Didn't feel right about it at all; had half a mind to carry it and leave it on the parson's doorstep that night; and should, if it had not been for Sam Smikes. He persuaded me to hide it in the woods, and we ate it up after a while, what we didn't give to other boys; but my having cheese to give away brought me out. I was punished at home; and

Parson Goodhue reproved me in such a way that I thought he had made up his mind that I was cut out for a real bad boy, and would always suspect and dislike me."

"He was not that sort of a man," said John; "that was all the work of your imagination."

"I suppose it was; but it had the effect of making me dislike him, and think he disliked me; would give me a bad name, and everybody would take their cue from him; this made me dislike to go to meeting. About this time, Sam Smike and some more boys got into his orchard, and stole apples. The next Sunday he preached from the words, 'What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.' I thought he looked at me; and as I was not in the affair, and knew nothing about it, this prejudiced me still further. About this time, an old broken-down sailor came along in one of the vessels, and his company and conversation corrupted me greatly, and I began to long to go to sea, where I could do as I liked. Every evening I used to be down to the store, or at Sawyer's shoemaker's shop, to hear him talk, and begun to swear because he did, though I took

very good care not to let my father know it, or anybody that I thought would tell him. Uncle Isaac Murch was hewing a barn frame, and where the bark was off the stick he wanted a colored line, as chalk wouldn't show on the white wood. He used to burn an alder stick to a coal, and rub that on the line, which made a black mark that would show well. Lion Ben came home from sea about that time, and gave him some red chalk. There had never been any seen in the place before, and the old man thought a great deal of it. I wanted it. O, how I wanted that chalk! I hung round while he was at work, would take it up and look at it, and make marks on the timber; my fingers itched to close on it; but I had been trained to a horror of stealing, and had never taken so much as a pin. Uncle Isaac kept the chalk in his pocket, except he was using it a great deal, when he would lay it down on the timber; but one day he went to dinner, and forgot it. I seized the opportunity, and took it. But it burnt in my hands like a hot coal. I thought everybody I met knew I had it, and I scarcely slept that night; but after a while the feeling wore off. Uncle Isaac suspected and taxed me with it; but I denied it. I now

began to be considered a bad boy, and the knowledge of it made me worse, as I thought I had no longer anything to lose. Then Pete Clash came. I began to go with him; the decent boys shunned me, and after that affair with you and the dog, I ran away to sea, and joined Pete."

"But," said Walter, "it was a long step from what you was then, to becoming a pirate."

"Not so far as you may think. I was already a thief, a liar, a profane swearer, revengeful, of violent temper, and had got my conscience well under foot. After a while, tempted by high wages, we shipped in a Guineaman, and there I got well hardened, and became entirely callous to human suffering. We shipped in a Scotch brig to go to Guadaloupe, and were taken by pirates; were offered our lives if we would join them, which we did, both meaning to leave them at the first chance; but we soon came to be as hard as any of them. I suppose you both think that if a man can have all the money he wants, he's well enough."

"I don't think any such thing," said Walter.

"Nor I," said John; "I think a man that has got money and nothing else, neither character, friends, nor inward happiness, is a poor, miserable wretch, no matter how much he has."

"I hope you'll hold to that opinion, for you see lying here in this hammock just such a miserable wretch. I have money, money in abundance; more than I know what to do with; gold and silver buried in the ground in different places; but I would give it all, and be willing to perform the meanest drudgery, to get back for one hour the peace of mind I once had;" and he burst into tears.

The boys were confounded; unconscious of the gnawings of guilt, or the pangs of an aroused conscience, they looked on in silent amazement, having no consolation to offer, and not knowing how to break the silence. It was a touching scene, presented in that sick bay and abandoned man, hardened by the practice of crime, and whose trade was in blood, tortured by the stings of an awakened conscience, melted by the recollections of the time when he had felt a mother's hand upon his head, and her tears warm on his cheek, and in the solitude of her own closet she had taught him to kneel beside her, and consecrated him to God; while those pure-minded youth (whose faculties, as they developed, had been met by genial influences, and guided into fruitful paths) looked on with mingled pity and wonder.

But this was a position where the instincts of a pure and generous nature are a surer guide than the learning of the schools, or even knowledge gained by experience of men and things. They wept with him.

Godsoe, who was the first to recover himself, perceiving their emotion, said, —

“Although you must abhor, yet I feel that you pity me.”

“We do,” replied John, now compelled to speak; “it is all that we can do; but there is One can do for you what no other can.”

“I know what you mean, for I cannot plead ignorance; it were better for me if I could. We will not speak of that now; I can bear no more at present. You see from how small beginnings I was led on; hereafter we shall talk freely, and I am grateful for the kindness you have shown me.”

It was evident that the pirate cared not to reveal more of his own history or feelings; and Walter, in order to vary the conversation, inquired if the place of concealment in the run was made when the vessel was built.

“No,” was the reply; “I made it. Clash and myself wanted a hiding-place, both from the crew

and Lemaire, who was always looking over the vessel in our absence. I was a year and more about it, as I could work only at particular times, for fear of being discovered. I chopped out the old 'rider' with an axe; the same bolts, cut off with a file, served as dowels to confine the new one, and the heads of them driven in again to give the appearance of fastening."

"Who," asked John, "did that money and other valuables belong to?"

"Clash and myself; it was our share of plunder obtained at different times."

"What security had Lemaire that you would render to him a fair share of the booty?"

"None but our honor."

"Then there is honor among pirates?"

"Yes, or the business could not go on; and we were bound by oaths, that even pirates respect, and he who breaks them is punished with death by the rest."

"Can you give us any more information in respect to Lemaire?"

"Yes; that he is a retired pirate captain."

"And his real name is Ruis."

"Ah! are you aware of that?"

Walter related to him what Lallemont had told him.

"I believe that is true; his house is of stone, and I have heard Clash say, that in the wall of his bedroom, behind a large painting representing the harbor of Port Royal, is a place of concealment, where are papers relating to his old affairs; he drank Lemaire under the table, and looked into it."

With the exception of about thirty-six hours, the two vessels had been becalmed, or compelled to contend with very light head winds, and made scarcely any progress; but the day succeeding the conversation we have narrated, the wind sprang up, and the Casco steered for Port Royal, and the brigantine for Vauclin. Having made the land, the Languedoc ran within a short distance of Diamond Rock, on the southern part of the island, lay off and on till sundown, and then entered the pass, coming to anchor in the mouth of the creek just before midnight. The crew were told that all hands might turn in, as there was no anchor watch to be kept that night.

Godsoe, who, for the last few days, had walked about below, having recovered the use of his

limbs, now came on deck, and entered the boat, while the second mate and Sewall Lancaster were, to their utter amazement, ordered to pull him ashore.

"Will he come back, think you?" said John, as the boat was lost to view; "or will he make the best of his way to Lemaire, and warn him of his danger?"

"He'll keep his word, and come back."

"But he confesses himself, when a boy, to have been a thief and a liar, and has been growing worse ever since."

"I have confidence in him. I have not had much experience; but I have had sufficient to convince me that the things his mother taught him are like ballast floored over in a ship's bottom, not easily to be got rid of."

"We shall soon know."

As the boat approached the pier, they were hailed; in reply to which, Godsoe uttered the word, "Languedoc."

"Is that you, Dick?"

"Ay, ay! Where is Lemaire?"

"In his bed."

"Tell him the captain wants him to come on board directly."

"Ay, ay. Coming ashore?"

"Not yet; by and by. I am wounded. Can you give me a bed to-night, and a mule in the morning?"

"Yes."

"Here they come," said John, hearing the dip of oars.

When Godsoe reached the deck, he trembled like an aspen leaf, from weakness and conflicting emotions.

"Lemaire will be on board in half an hour or thereabouts," he said. "Let some one keep watch, and when the boat comes alongside, I'll come on deck."

"Now, Sewall," said the captain, "do you and Savage keep watch; and if a boat comes alongside, get out of sight, for Henri Lemaire will be in her. He it was that sent this brigantine after us. I mean to put him in irons, and hang him if I can. He don't know the vessel has changed hands, and if he sees you, will take alarm."

When Lancaster gave notice of the approach of the boat, Godsoe, who had been resting himself, went to the gangway.

"Boat, ahoy!"

"Is that you, lieutenant?" replied Lemaire.

"Ay, ay, monsieur."

Godsoe held out the man-ropes, and Lemaire came over the side. As he stepped on deck, he said, —

"Did you find the ship?"

"Yes, and had a hard fight of it. The captain is below expecting you."

Not doubting but his object was accomplished, Lemaire hastened to the cabin in order to meet Clash, and learn the details of the conflict, and met, face to face, the very man whose murder he had begun to exult over; heard the doors of the companion-way shut behind him, and the bolts shoved into their place.

"Good evening, Monsieur Lemaire; excuse me that I do not offer my hand; but having paid my respects to your subordinates, I have returned to repay the favors I have received from you."

For a moment only this hardened villain stood overwhelmed with disappointment and surprise; then, with a yell of rage, he seized Walter by the throat, at the same time drawing a dagger concealed in the breast of his garment; but before he could inflict a fatal blow, his wrist was seized

by John, while Walter grappled with him in turn. Of great strength, and inured to hard conflicts, the pirate struggled desperately, but in vain. He was powerless in the grasp of John Rhines, who, flinging his arms around him, held him securely, while Walter, after putting irons on his wrists, passed a hammock lashing over his arms, and fastened them behind his back. Godsoe went ashore in Lemaire's boat, informing Juan Romero, the overseer, that Lemaire would pass the night on board.

At Port Royal, where Walter met the *Casco*, he delivered up his prisoner, with the proofs of his guilt, to the proper authorities, claiming the *Languedoc* as his lawful prize. The wealth found in the dead-wood was divided between the officers and owners of the *Casco*.

When the estates of Lemaire were seized by the civil authorities, great quantities of goods of all kinds were found in secret deposits at Vauclin and upon the other plantations, the fruits of piracy — silks, linens, laces, wines, spices, perfumes, drugs, gums, and tools of all kinds, sugar, teas, and coffee. These were sold at auction. By reason of the many delays growing out of the

capture and trial of Lemaire, rafting his cargo ashore at Sans-souci, and putting back after sailing, Walter had consumed the whole winter; but now he had an opportunity to remunerate himself and his owners.

In the first place, he was allowed to retain the Languedoc; Lemaire's goods went low at public sale, and the portion of money found in the "run" that fell to the owners was sufficient to load the brigantine, complete the cargo of the Casco, and pay the expense of extra men and provisions to man and victual both vessels.

The Casco remained at Port Royal, drawing too much water, when deep loaded, to enter the passe Vaublin; and the merchandise necessary to complete her cargo was brought from thence in drogers.

Captain Griffin now resumed the command of his own vessel, giving up the brigantine to Ned, placing Cameron with him for mate. Homeward bound, and waiting only for a favorable wind, our limits compel us to take leave of them for the present. Whatever of incident and adventure the future conceals will be related in the succeeding volume of the series, "THE CHILD OF THE ISLAND GLEN."

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